

WEIRD TALES OF SUSPENSE AND HORROR

THE

THING!

10¢
CDC

NO 4

ALDEN
BLAKE

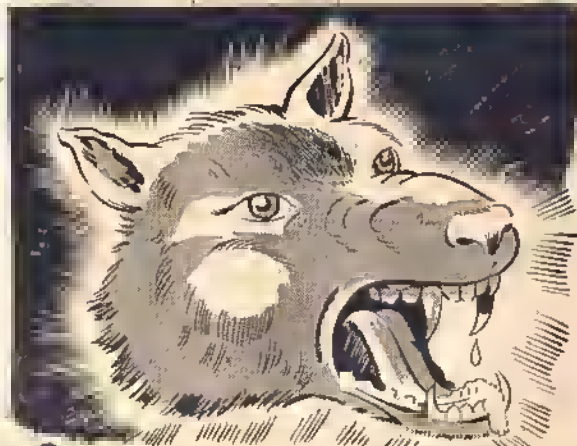
in this issue
I WAS A ZOMBIE
PROMISE OF YING KO
PARTNERS IN DEATH
TWINS OF DOOM
PETRIFIED GIANT

AL FAGO

The image features a dense background collage of vintage comic book covers. Titles visible include "Supermouse", "JETTA", "MYSTERY COMICS", "FANTASTIC TALES", "COSMO CAT", "STARTLING COMICS", "STRANGE MYSTERIES", "DARING ADVENTURES", "FAMOUS FUNNIES", "HILARIOUS RAUCOUS", "TEEN-AGE SWEETHEART OF THE 21st CENTURY", "DUCK", "EERIE", "EXCITING COMICS", "CASPER CAT", "BARNYARD COMICS", and "STRANGE WORLDS". The covers depict various genres including superhero action, mystery, science fiction, and humor. Overlaid on this collage is a large, dark purple speech bubble with a thick black outline. Inside the bubble, the text "WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow effect.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

MEET... THE HOUNDS OF DARTMOOR.



OCCASIONAL VICTIMS HAVE BEEN FOUND UPON THE MOOR SUPPOSEDLY SLAIN BY THE HELL HOUNDS... BUT THIS COULD BE A "COVER UP" FOR MURDER...

OFTEN, THE BAYING OF THESE PHANTOM BEASTS CAN BE HEARD FROM THE MIST AND WITNESSES HAVE CLAIMED SEEING THEM RACE PAST... LIKE HOUNDS OF HELL!



SOME SKEPTICS CLAIM THAT THE LEGEND OF THE HOUNDS WAS SPREAD TO DISCOURAGE CONVICTS WHO PLANNED TO ESCAPE FROM DARTMOOR PRISON...



THE FAMOUS SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY, "THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES" BY CONAN DOYLE WAS INSPIRED BY THE LEGEND OF THE GHOSTLY DARTMOOR HOUNDS!

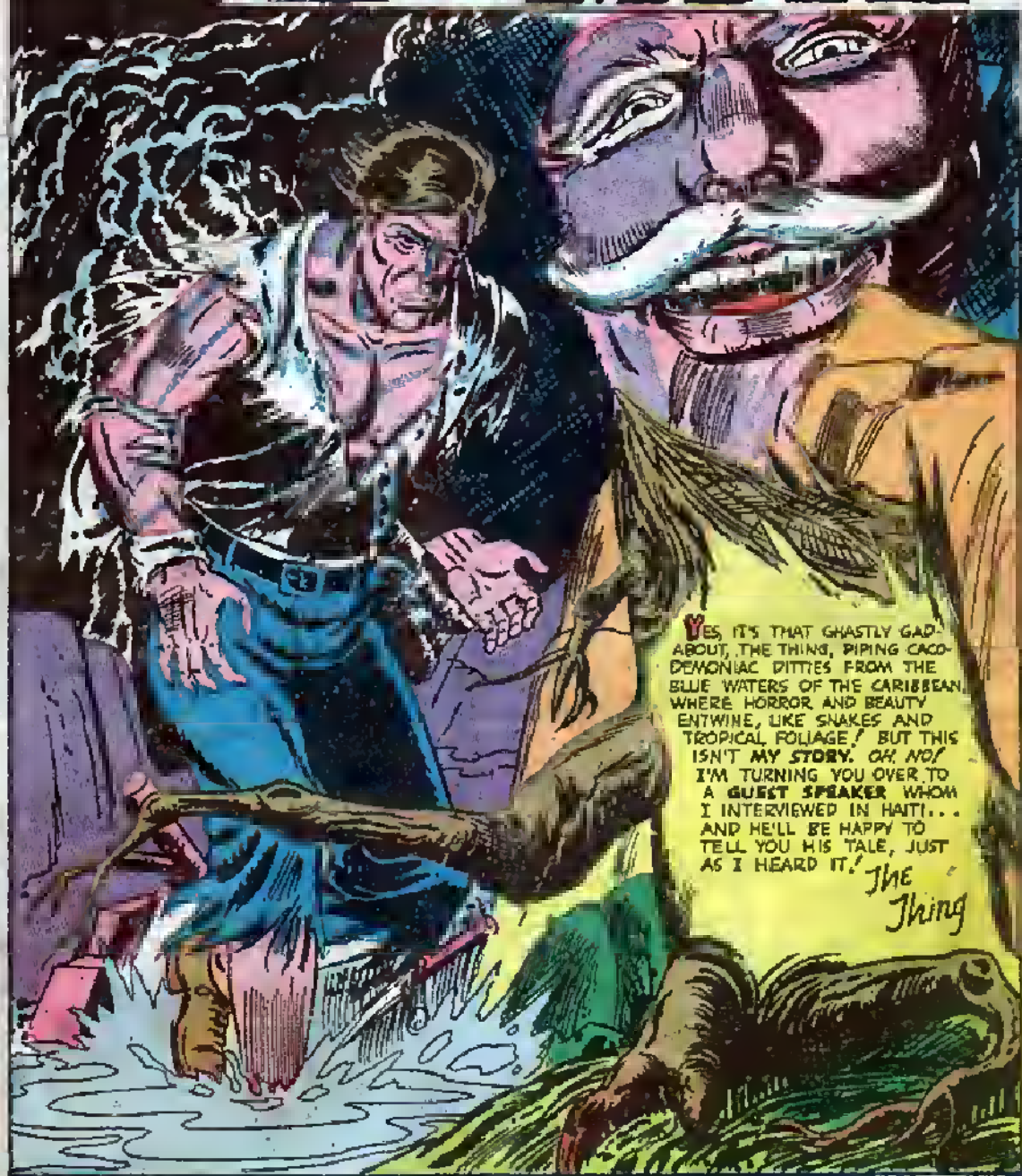


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THE THING

IN ALL THE ANNALS OF THE INCREDIBLE, NO TALE COULD BE MORE FEARFUL, MORE SOUL RENDING THAN THIS WEIRD CONFESSION OF ALDEN BLAKE...

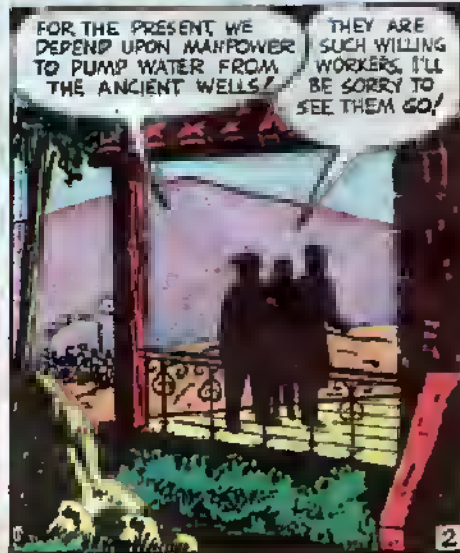
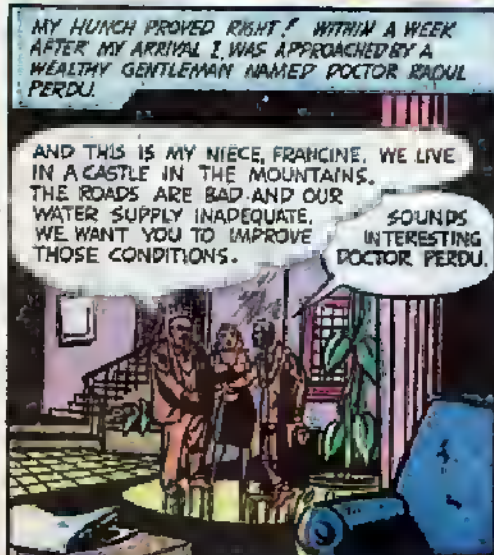
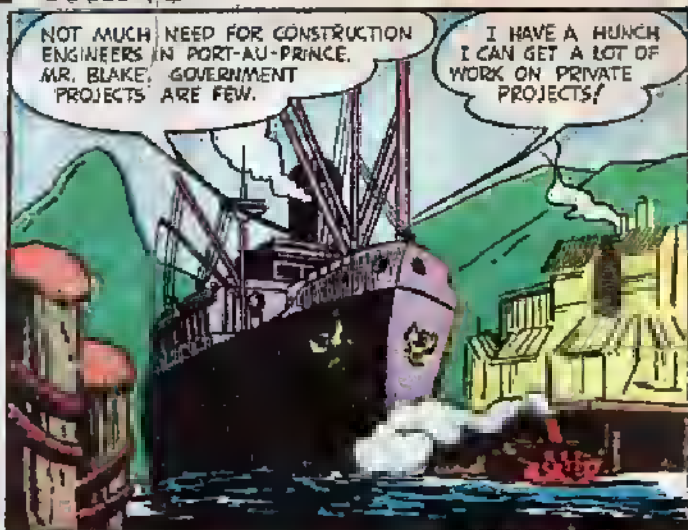
I was a **ZOMBIE**



YES, IT'S THAT GHASTLY GAD-ABOUT, THE THING, PIPING CACODEMONIAC DITTIES FROM THE BLUE WATERS OF THE CARIBBEAN, WHERE HORROR AND BEAUTY ENTWINE, LIKE SNAKES AND TROPICAL FOLIAGE! BUT THIS ISN'T MY STORY. OH, NO! I'M TURNING YOU OVER TO A GUEST SPEAKER WHOM I INTERVIEWED IN HAITI... AND HE'LL BE HAPPY TO TELL YOU HIS TALE, JUST AS I HEARD IT!

The Thing

THE THING



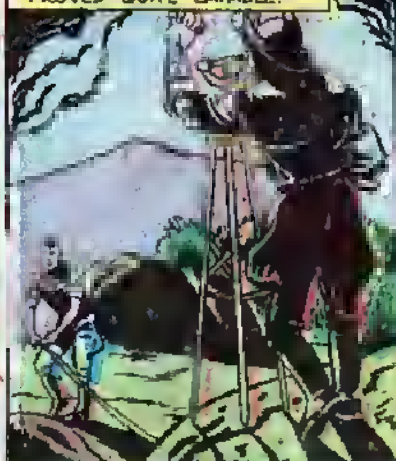
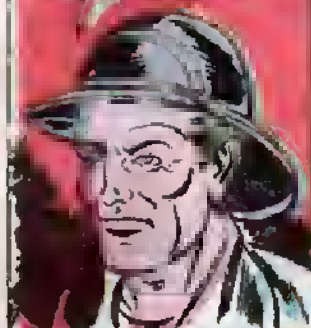
THE THING

"WILLING WORKERS!" IF I HAD ONLY REALIZED THE FULL MEANING OF THE TERM RIGHT THEN!!! WILLING THEY WERE... BECAUSE THEY HAD NO WILLS OF THEIR OWN, THOSE LIVING DEAD

THE NEXT DAY I BEGAN MY SURVEY, AIDED BY SOME OF PERDU'S SERVANTS WHO PROVED QUITE CAPABLE.

AND HOW IS THE WORK COMING, MONSIEUR ALDEN?

VERY NIKELY, MADAM. MOISELLE FRANKINE. WE'LL BE STARTING THE DAM IN A FEW DAYS!



BUT WHERE WILL YOUR UNCLE FIND THE WORKERS?

IN THE VILLAGE, HERE... LET'S TAKE THIS PATH AND I CAN SHOW YOU!

WHY, THIS VILLAGE IS DESERTED. THE ONLY LIVE THING IN IT IS THE CEMETERY!

YOU ARE RIGHT! I MEAN IT ONLY LOOKS DESERTED. THE NATIVES ARE STILL TAKING THEIR SIESTA. THEY SLEEP IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY!

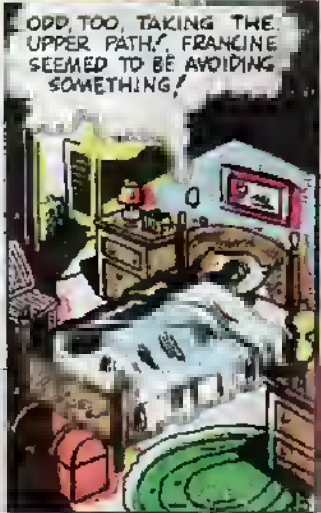


THE SHORTEST WAY TO THE CASTLE IS PAST THE WATER WHEEL. FRANCINE!

BUT THIS WAY IS SAFER. AFTER ALL IT IS GETTING DARK!

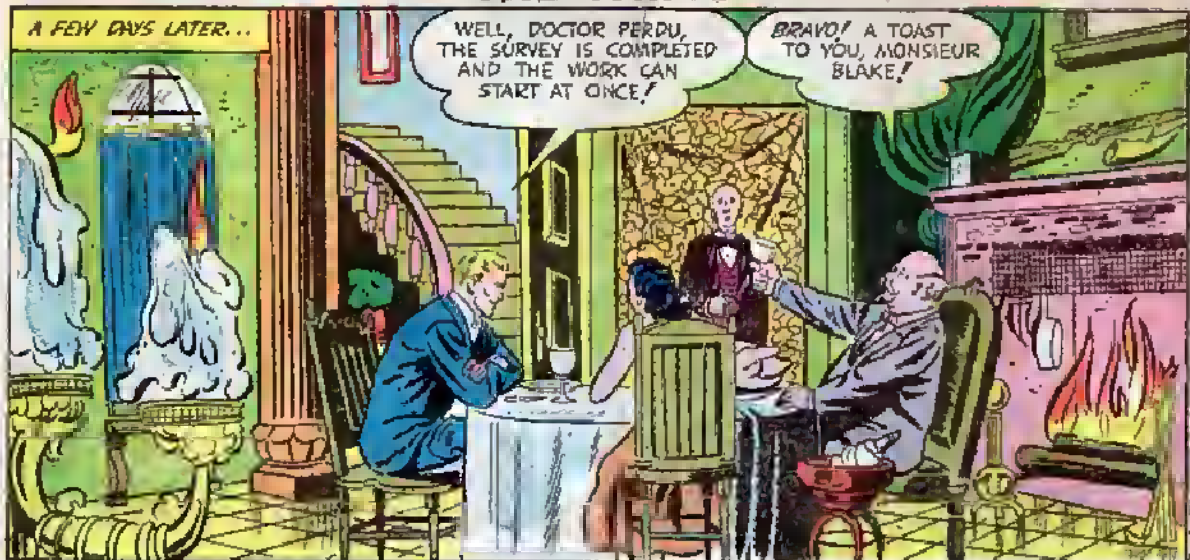
THAT NIGHT I LAY AWAKE WONDERING... STRANGE, HOW FRANCINE HAD SAID THE VILLAGERS WERE SLEEPING THROUGH THE HEAT, WHEN THE COOL OF EVENING HAD ALREADY ARRIVED!

ODD, TOO, TAKING THE UPPER PATH, FRANCINE SEEMED TO BE AVOIDING SOMETHING!



THE THING

A FEW DAYS LATER...



WELL, DOCTOR PERDU, THE SURVEY IS COMPLETED AND THE WORK CAN START AT ONCE!

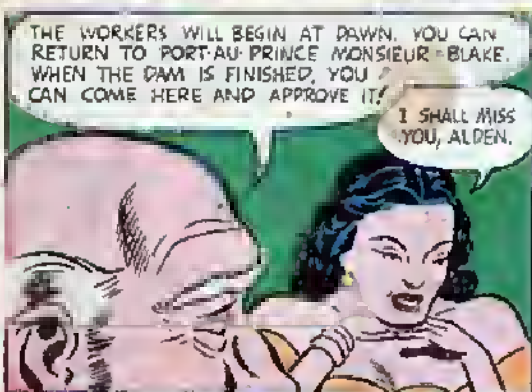
BRAVO! A TOAST TO YOU, MONSIEUR BLAKE!

THE WORKERS WILL BEGIN AT DAWN. YOU CAN RETURN TO PORT-AU-PRINCE MONSIEUR-BLAKE. WHEN THE DAM IS FINISHED, YOU CAN COME HERE AND APPROVE IT!

I SHALL MISS YOU, ALDEN.

SOMETIMES THE MOST TRIFLING INCIDENTS CAN SHAPE OUR DESTINIES! THE NEXT MORNING, WHILE THE MULES WERE BEING LOADED, I REMEMBERED THAT I HAD LEFT MY PIPE UP BY THE DAM SITE...

JUST KEEP LOADING, I'LL BE BACK BEFORE YOU FINISH!



ZOMBIES! THE LIVING DEAD! NO WONDER THE VILLAGE WAS EMPTY! ITS ONLY INHABITANTS WERE IN THEIR GRAVES!

I KNEW NOW WHY FRANKIE HAD AVOIDED PASSING THE WATER WHEEL, I RUSHED THERE...

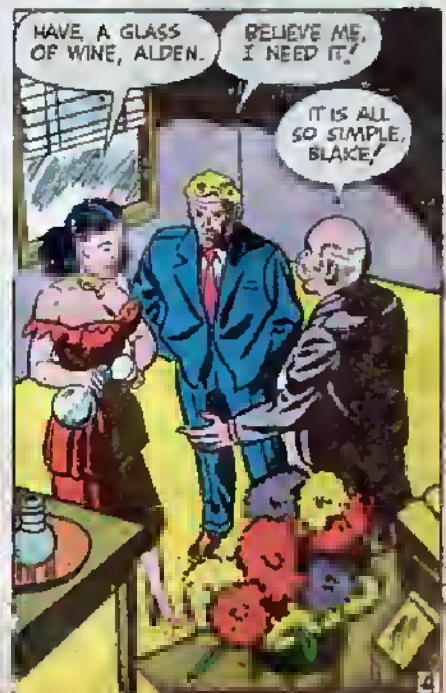
THESE MEN ARE ZOMBIES, TOO!

EXACTLY, BLAKE, BUT BEFORE YOU JUDGE ME TOO HARSHLY, COME TO THE CASTLE, AND LET ME EXPLAIN!

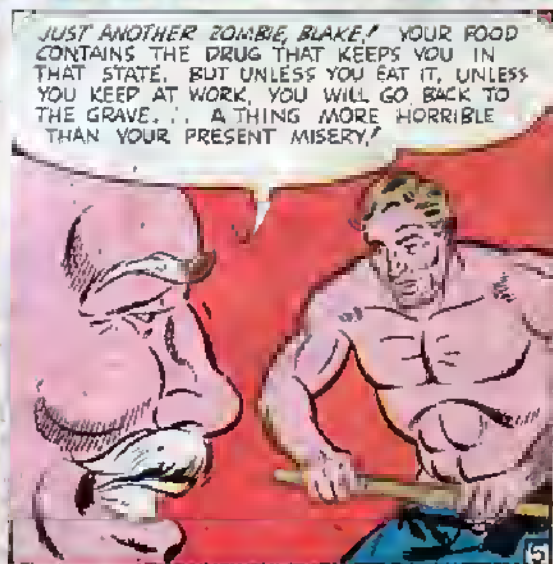
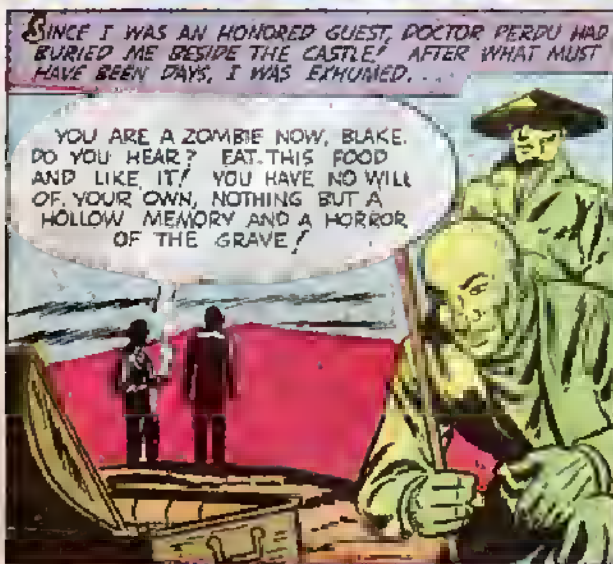
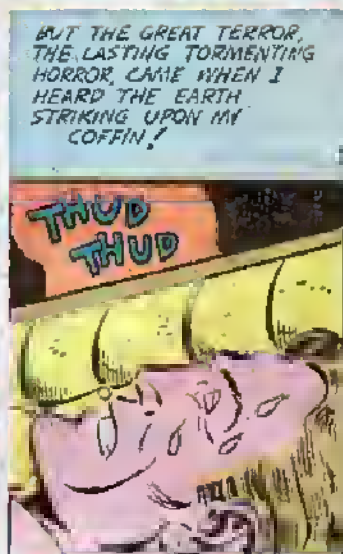
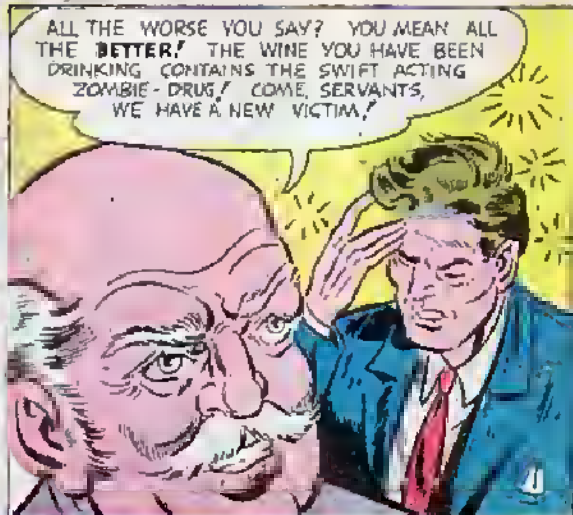
HAVE A GLASS OF WINE, ALDEN.

BELIEVE ME, I NEED IT!

IT IS ALL SO SIMPLE, BLAKE!



THE THING



THE THING

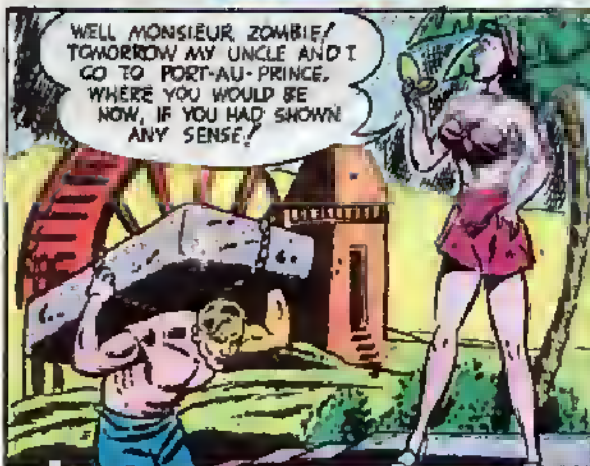
DAY AFTER DAY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, I TOILED AT THE WHEEL, NEVER TIRING, FOR I HAD TOO MUCH OF BODY AND BRAIN TO KNOW THE MEANING OF FATIGUE...



BUT ALL THE WHILE I WATCHED THE DAM THAT I HAD PLANNED, AS IT GREW HIGHER AND HIGHER, BUILT BY ZOMBIES LIKE MYSELF!!!



WELL MONSIEUR ZOMBIE! TOMORROW MY UNCLE AND I GO TO PORT-AU-PRINCE. WHERE YOU WOULD BE NOW, IF YOU HAD SPOUNED ANY SENSE!



THE RAINS!!! DULLED THOUGH MY BRAIN WAS, IT STILL RETAINED AN ENGINEER'S KNOWLEDGE! I COULD SEE THAT THE ZOMBIE-BUILT DAM WOULD NOT HOLD BACK THE TROPICAL FLOODS... THE VERY DAY THAT PERDU LEFT, I DERIED HIS THREAT AND REBELLED!!!

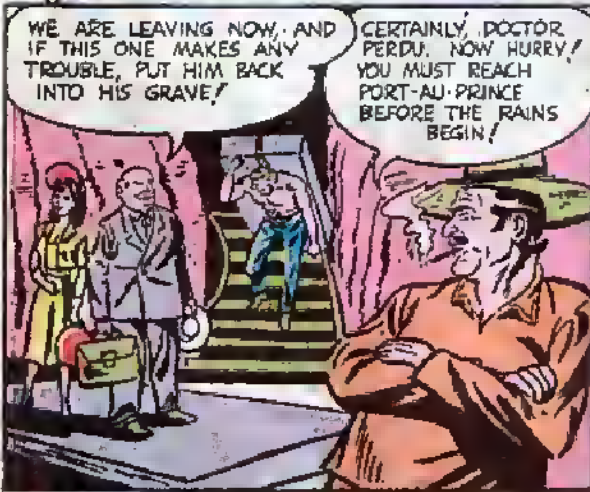
STOP THAT, FOOL!

PUT HIM BACK IN HIS GRAVE AS DR. PERDU ORDERED!



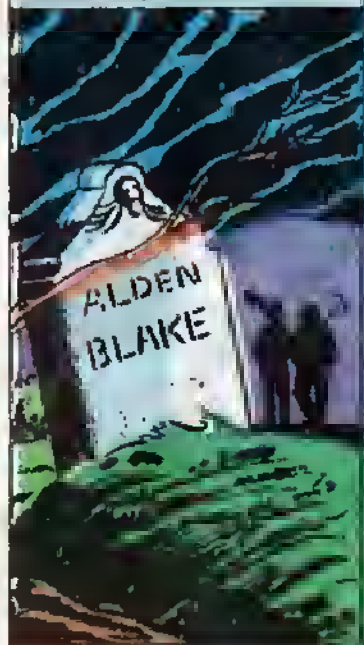
WE ARE LEAVING NOW, AND IF THIS ONE MAKES ANY TROUBLE, PUT HIM BACK INTO HIS GRAVE!

CERTAINLY, DOCTOR PERDU. NOW HURRY! YOU MUST REACH PORT-AU-PRINCE BEFORE THE RAINS BEGIN!

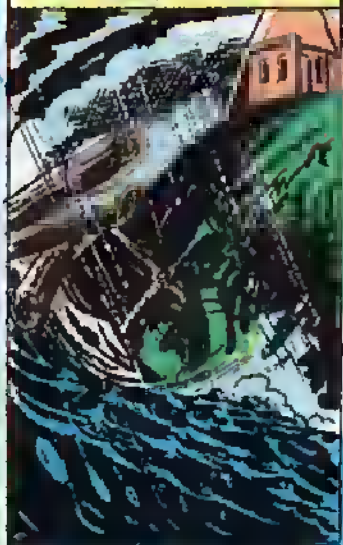


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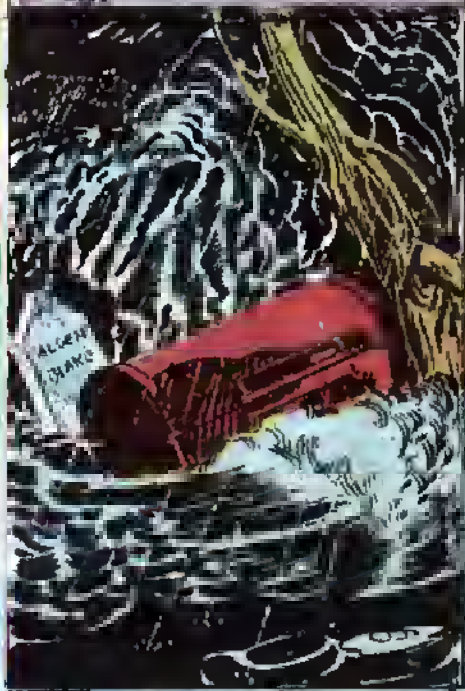
ONLY A ZOMBIE COULD HAVE FACED THAT ORDEAL OF A LIVING BURIAL! MY ONE DULL HOPE AS I LAY BENEATH THE GROUND WAS THAT THE FLOODS WOULD COME BEFORE THE DRUG WORE OFF!



A DAY OR MORE HAD PASSED FOR I WAS AWAKENING TO THE TERROR THAT DOCTOR PERDU HAD PREDICTED SOON I WOULD HAVE BECOME FRANTIC AND BATTERED MYSELF TO A PULP WITHIN MY TOMB, WHEN SUDDENLY THE FLOODS HAD ARRIVED, SWEEPING THE WEAK DAM WITH THEM...



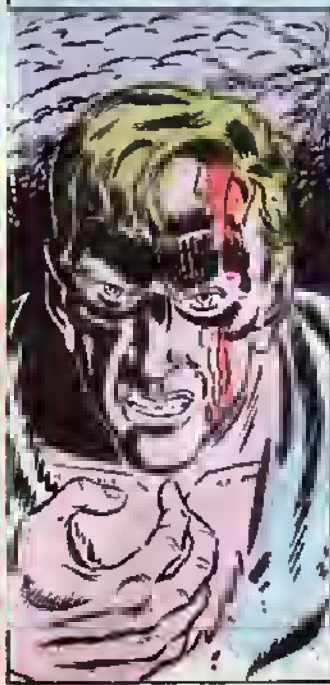
MY GRAVE WAS DIRECTLY IN THE FLOOD'S PATH AS I ANTICIPATED, THE GROUND WAS OPENED AND WITHIN MY COFFIN I WAS CARRIED AWAY ON THE RAGING TIDE!!!



AFTER MANY MILES, THE MAD RACE ENDED WITH A CRASH THAT HURLED ME FROM MY IMPROVISED BOAT... WE HAD STRUCK THE BUTTRISS OF A RAILROAD BRIDGE.



I SCRAMBLED UP TO SAFETY AND FOUND A HAND CAR IN A WORK SHED...THROUGH THE STORM I RODE, A HIDEOUS CREATURE, WITH A ONE TRACK MIND GEARED TO VENGEANCE!!!



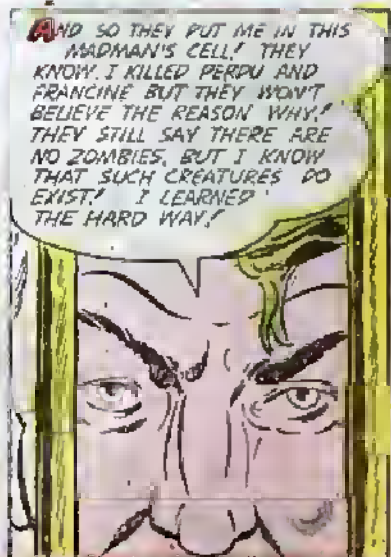
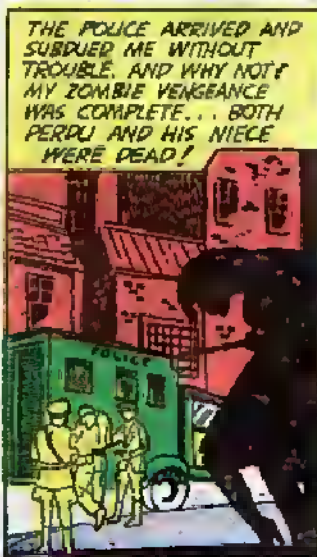
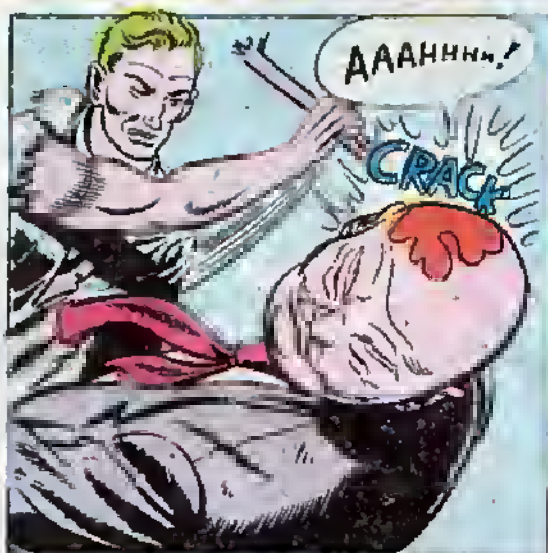
ARRIVED IN PORT-AU-PRINCE, I WENT FROM ONE CAFE TO ANOTHER PAUSING ONLY TO STARE LIKE SOME MONSTROUS GHOUL...UNTIL...



A ZOMBIE FROM THE HILLS!

IT'S BLAKE! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, FRANCINE!

THE THING



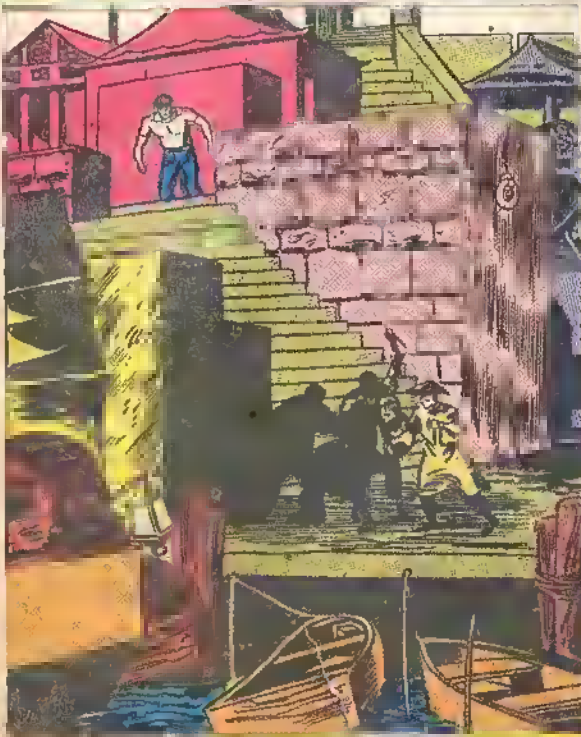
THE THING

THE THING
PRESENTS

The Promise of YING KO

BACK BEFORE WORLD WAR II, STEVE PAYNE WAS THE THIRD-MATE OF AN OLD TRAMP STEAMER THAT PLODGED ALONG THE CHINESE COAST... ONE NIGHT, WHEN RETURNING TO HIS SHIP, THE **LEANDER**, HE ENCOUNTERED AN ADVENTURE THAT WAS TO INTRODUCE HIM TO STRANGE LAWS OF LIFE AND DEATH.

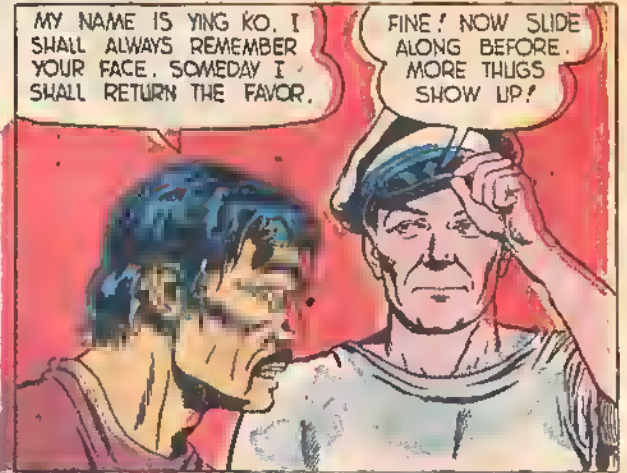
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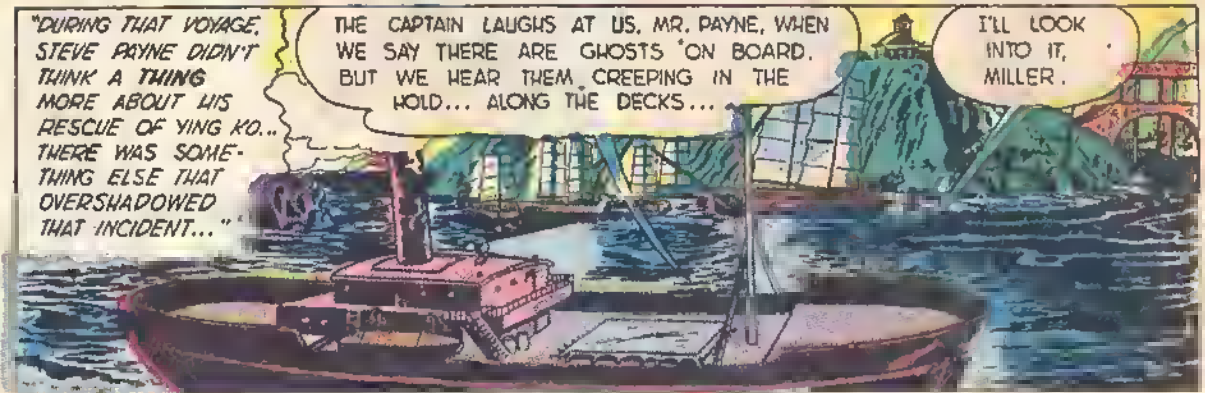


YOU HAVE SAVED MY LIFE. I THANK YOU!



MY NAME IS YING KO. I SHALL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR FACE. SOMEDAY I SHALL RETURN THE FAVOR.

FINE! NOW SLIDE ALONG BEFORE. MORE THUGS SHOW UP!



"DURING THAT VOYAGE, STEVE PAYNE DIDN'T THINK A THING MORE ABOUT HIS RESCUE OF YING KO... THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE THAT OVERSHADOWED THAT INCIDENT..."

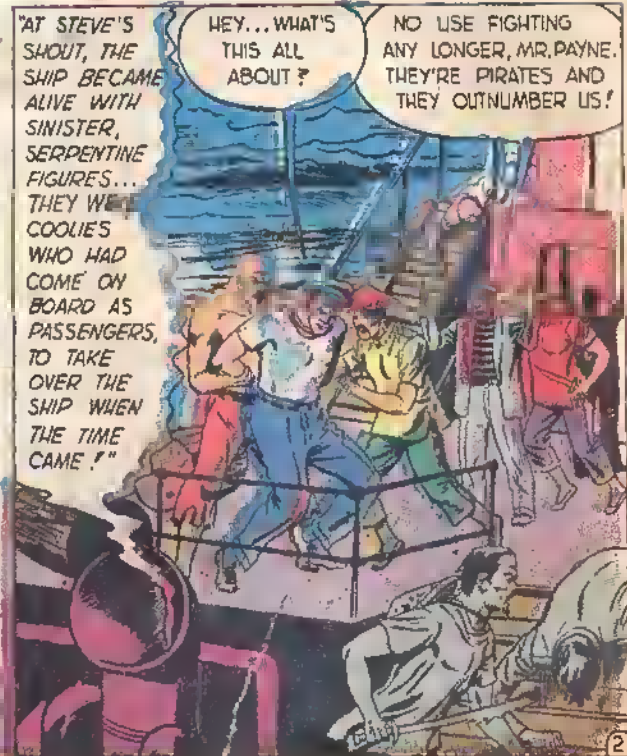
THE CAPTAIN LAUGHS AT US, MR. PAYNE, WHEN WE SAY THERE ARE GHOSTS 'ON BOARD. BUT WE HEAR THEM CREEPING IN THE HOLD... ALONG THE DECKS...

I'LL LOOK INTO IT, MILLER.



HELP! GAAA!

ALL HANDS ON DECK! I'VE FOUND A GHOST!



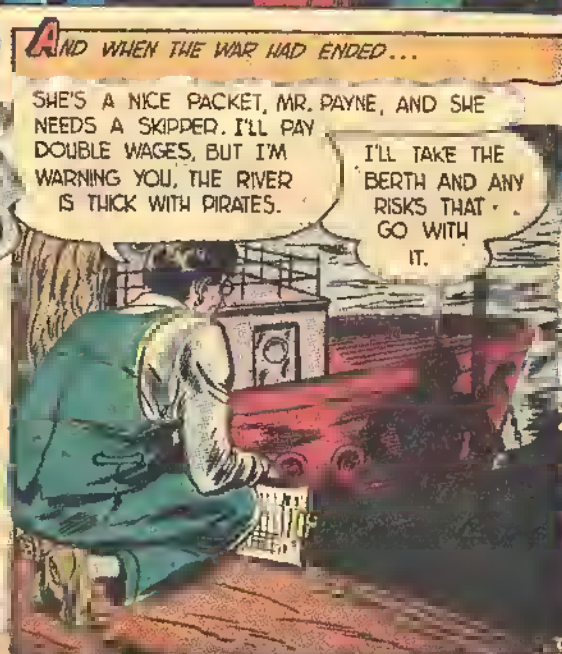
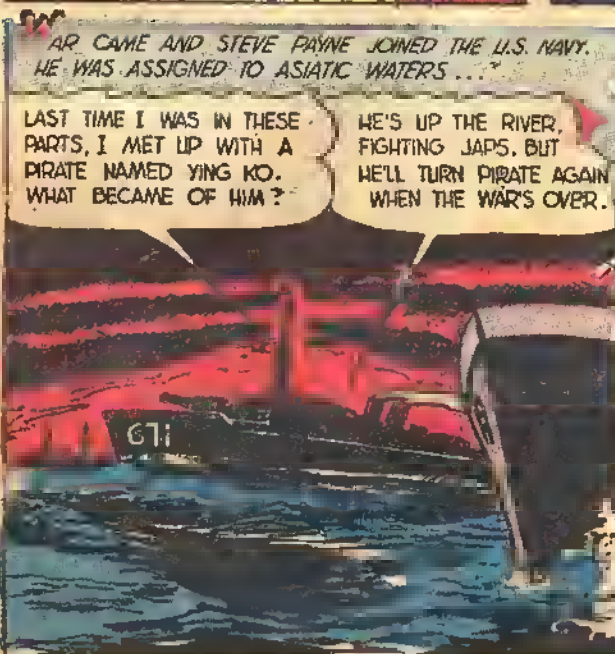
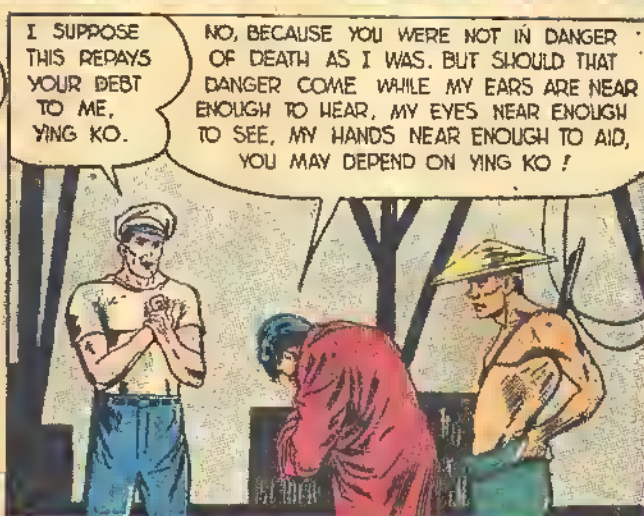
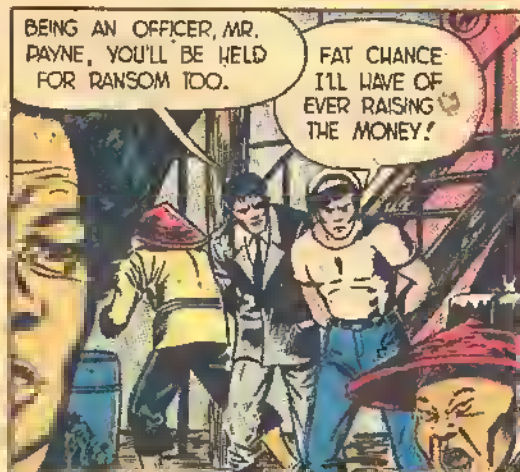
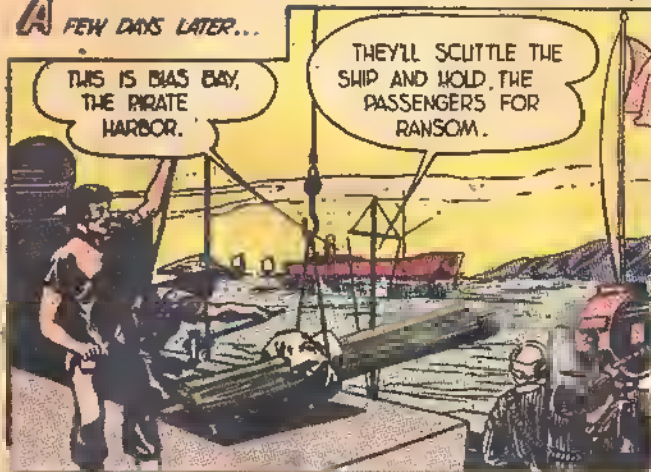
"AT STEVE'S SHOUT, THE SHIP BECAME ALIVE WITH SINISTER, SERPENTINE FIGURES... THEY WERE COOLIES WHO HAD COME ON BOARD AS PASSENGERS, TO TAKE OVER THE SHIP WHEN THE TIME CAME!"

HEY...WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

NO USE FIGHTING ANY LONGER, MR. PAYNE. THEY'RE PIRATES AND THEY OUTNUMBER US!

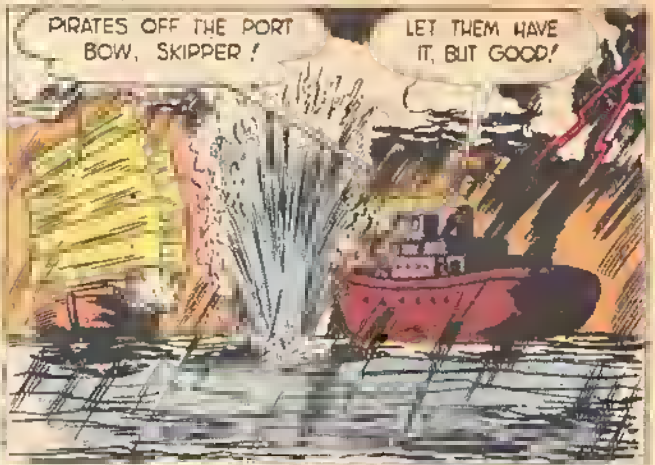
THE THING

A FEW DAYS LATER...



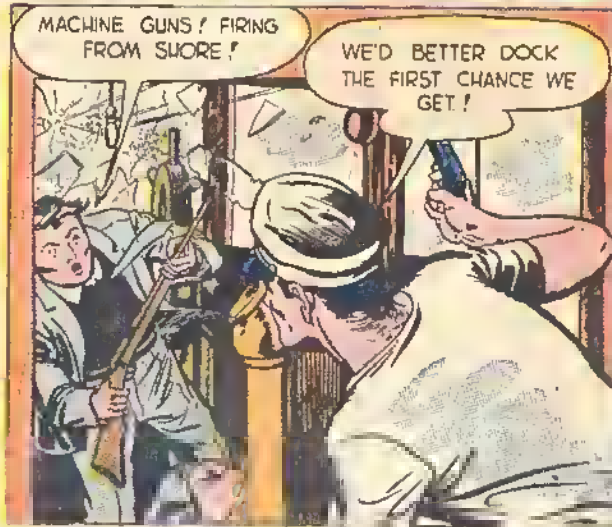
THE THING

FOR MONTHS, STEVE PILOTED THE MURDEN UP AND DOWN THE RIVER, CARRYING VALUABLE CARGOES UNTIL...



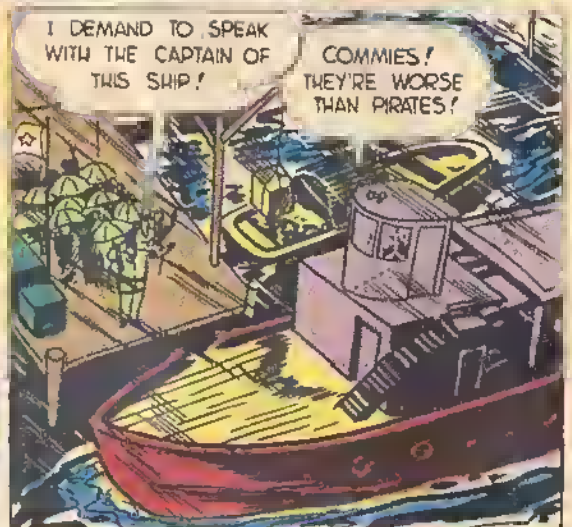
PIRATES OFF THE PORT BOW, SKIPPER!

LET THEM HAVE IT, BUT GOOD!



MACHINE GUNS! FIRING FROM SHORE!

WE'D BETTER DOCK THE FIRST CHANCE WE GET!



I DEMAND TO SPEAK WITH THE CAPTAIN OF THIS SHIP!

COMMIES! THEY'RE WORSE THAN PIRATES!



YOUR PAPERS ARE IN ORDER, MR. PAYNE, SO YOUR VESSEL MAY PROCEED. BUT YOU MUST WAIT OVER AND DISCUSS THIS WITH OUR COMMANDANT.

VERY WELL!



YOU ADMIT THAT YOU FIRED ON MY MEN. THAT MAKES YOUR ACT PIRACY. FOR THAT YOU SHALL DIE AT DAWN!

WHY, YOU RAT!

COME ALONG MR. PAYNE, UNLESS YOU PREFER TO DIE SOONER.

THE THING

"THERE IS OUR WEEK'S CROP OF PIRATES, MR. PAYNE. ALL BEHEADED, DAWN BY DAWN, AT THE COMMANDANT'S ORDER, TOMORROW WILL BE YOUR TURN !



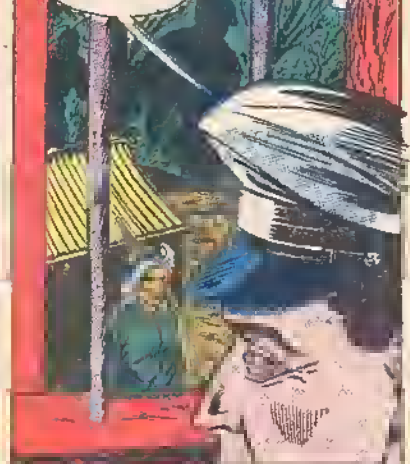
BUT DO NOT WORRY ! ONE STROKE OF THE SWORD AND ALL IS OVER. YOU WILL NOT SUFFER !

YOU'LL SUFFER IF I EVER GET OUT OF HERE !



"AS DARK SETTLED OVER THE CITY, STEVE'S FLIGHT SEEMED ALL THE WORSE. THEN ... SHADOWS STREAKED THE COURTYARD..."

IT'S YING KO !



HERE ... HERE IS THE KEY. TAKE IT... (GULP) RELEASE YOUR FRIEND..

I SHALL TAKE THE KEY, BUT FIRST I SHALL DEAL WITH YOU!



YING KO ! HOW DID YOU GET HERE ?

MY EARS WERE NEAR ENOUGH TO HEAR, MY EYES NEAR ENOUGH TO SEE...

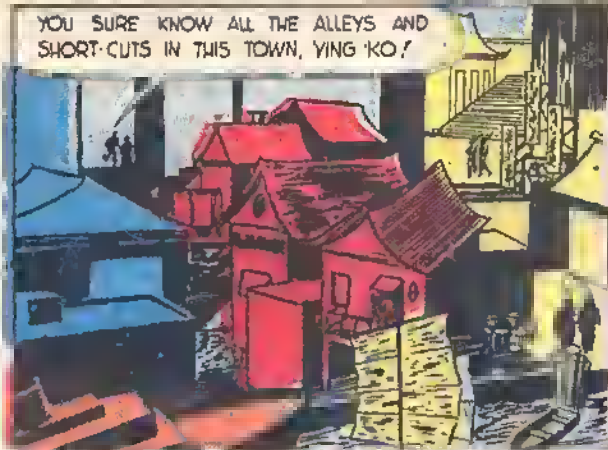
... AND MY HANDS WERE NEAR ENOUGH TO AID !

I'LL SAY ! YOU REALLY SAVED MY LIFE THIS TIME, YING KO. COME DOWN, I WAS TO BE JUST ANOTHER HEADLESS BODY!



THE THING

YOU SURE KNOW ALL THE ALLEYS AND SHORT-CUTS IN THIS TOWN, YING KO?



IN HERE, MY FRIEND!

I'LL BET IT WOULD TAKE THOSE COMMIES A WEEK TO FIND THIS HIDE-AWAY!



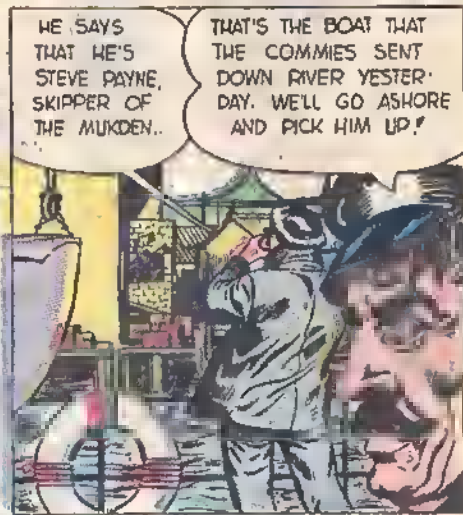
"WITH DAWN, STEVE PAYNE DISCOVERED THAT YING KO'S HIDE-AWAY WAS ON THE RIVER FRONT..."

MAYBE IF I WIGWAG THAT CABIN CRUISER I'LL GET RESULTS!



HE SAYS THAT HE'S STEVE PAYNE, SKIPPER OF THE MUKDEN...

THAT'S THE BOAT THAT THE COMMIES SENT DOWN RIVER YESTERDAY. WE'LL GO ASHORE AND PICK HIM UP!



WE'RE GOING DOWN RIVER, PAYNE, SO IF YOU'RE IN A JAM, YOU'D BETTER COME ALONG.

THANKS, I WILL BUT I WANT YOU TO MEET A FRIEND OF MINE, FIRST...



HIS NAME IS YING KO AND HE'S A RIGHT SORT, EVEN IF HE'S A 'PIRATE...

YING KO! WE CAN'T TAKE HIM ALONG!

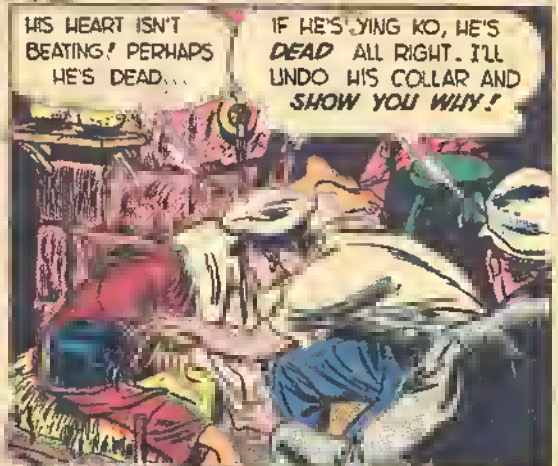


THE THING

WHY NOT? ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS WAKE HIM. YING KO...WAKE UP!

HIS HEART ISN'T BEATING? PERHAPS HE'S DEAD...

IF HE'S YING KO, HE'S DEAD. ALL RIGHT. I'LL UNDO HIS COLLAR AND SHOW YOU WHY!



YING KO WAS EXECUTED FOR PIRACY, YESTERDAY AT DAWN! I MYSELF WITNESSED HIS DECAPITATION IN THE JAIL YARD! SO COME ON, PAYNE, WE'RE GOING DOWN RIVER!



BUT IT *COULDN'T* HAVE BEEN YING KO WHO RESCUED YOU, PAYNE. SOMEBODY MUST HAVE DOUBLED FOR HIM AND SWITCHED THE BODY LATER...

ALL I KNOW IS WHAT YING KO PROMISED.

HIS EARS WERE NEAR ENOUGH TO HEAR, HIS EYES NEAR ENOUGH TO SEE, HIS HANDS NEAR ENOUGH TO AID ME... AND *THEY DID*, EVEN AFTER YING KO WAS DEAD!

"PERHAPS IT COULD HAVE BEEN SOMEONE ELSE... OR STEVE PAYNE MIGHT HAVE DREAMED IT ALL... OR MAKE YOUR OWN GUESS... BUT YOU WON'T CONVINCE STEVE! HE BELIEVES YING KO CAME TO LIFE TO KEEP HIS PROMISE AND STEVE WAS THERE TO SEE IT... SO I'M TAKING HIS WORD FOR IT!"



The Thing

THE UNSEEN THING

Why Professor Regulus Tarbell picked me to assist him in his chemical laboratory, I didn't know at first. The other students at Western University referred to the lab as the "stink-pot" but at the end of every day, Tarbell cleaned up the place meticulously, including whatever smells his session had produced.

"Why should chemicals react as they do?" Tarbell would ask, during an experiment. "Tell me that, Rollo, if you can!"

My only possible answer was a headshake.

"I wouldn't know, Professor," I always replied. "I'm not a chemist. I'm here studying theology."

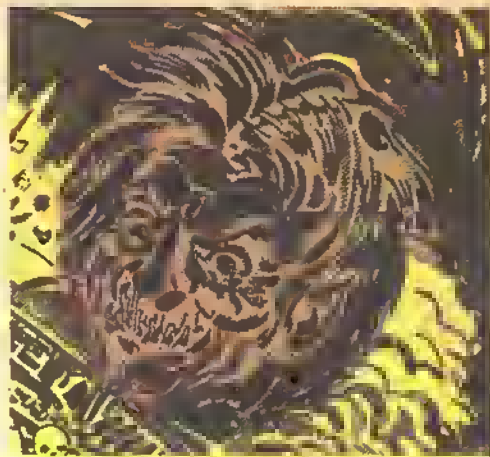
"Ah, yes," Tarbell would reply, with a whimsical smile. "You are the *only* theological student at Western University. That's why I gave you this spare-time job in my laboratory."

I must digress to explain why I, Rollo Hasbrouch, among more than five thousand students at Western U., was the only one registered in the course on theology.

Western University occupied ground once owned by a long-defunct Indian tribe. In going over the title, it was discovered that this was sacred soil on which Elkswatawa, the Shawnee Indian Prophet, had described his visits to the land of the Great Spirit. It had been decreed then that no white man could set foot on this soil, except to receive the teachings of Elkswatawa and pass them along to others of his race.

In order to preserve its charter, Western U. had to meet these terms. So a department of Shawnee Theology was established, with a single student. No instructor was needed; the lone student simply read the teachings of Elkswatawa from the numerous books in the University library. But it was his task to pass them along, because theoretically, he was trying to convert all his fellow-students to the teachings of the Prophet.

But I couldn't leave the campus, not even for a minute, during vacations as well as semesters. If a Congressional Committee had happened to come along and find me gone, there would have been nothing else to do but give



the college back to the Indians, buildings and all.

I'd been very unhappy indeed, until Professor Tarbell came to my rescue. He'd let me help him around the lab and whenever I wanted, I could talk to him about the Prophet. This had gone on until I wondered how any man could be so patient, until one day, when the prof was cleaning up in his patented style, he turned to me and said:

"How many more years do you have here, Rollo?"

"Two," I groaned. "With no vacation. Still, I get paid for it. But I wonder if it's worth it."

Tarbell nodded. He knew that I was the only paid student at Western U., because of the Indian deal. Then:

"Any time you want to take a trip, Rollo, go right ahead. Western University won't be sacrificed to the Indians."

"Why not, professor?"

"Because I believe the teachings of Elkswatawa. I have looked through the Open Door."

I looked at Tarbell and my eyes went goggly, the way the other students did when they looked at me during one of my spiels on Indian theology. Professor Tarbell chuckled as he gestured me from the lab.

"That's why I took you as my assistant," he stated. "We are both Elkswatawans in a way. But I must show you the great test. 'First, I shall lock the door' — Tarbell did so, very carefully — "and then we'll have dinner at the Commons. After that, we'll come back here."

When we returned and the professor unlocked the lab, he gestured me dramatically across the threshold and I stood rooted in amazement. Although Tarbell had left the place meticulously in order, now every breaker was overturned. Some test tubes had been smashed. Bottles were tilted on their shelves, burners were scattered on the floor.

"This has been happening every night," the prof stated. "I've been coming around in the morning and cleaning up again. That's why you haven't known it."

"But what causes this, professor?"

"My experiments, Rollo. The smelly stuff I've been concocting is all composed of Indian herbs. You know all about them."

"Yes, I know." My mind reverted to my reading in the library. "Elkswatawa's followers used many ceremonial powders during their rituals. They were supposed to bring in spirits from the realms beyond — except when the Prophet went there himself."

"Not necessarily spirits, Rollo," Tarbell's tone was hushed. "Just creatures. Unseen things — from another dimension."

I stared at Tarbell blankly. He smiled.

"You don't believe me, Rollo? Then, listen!"

I listened. Slowly, gradually, a stentorian sort of breathing registered itself upon my strained ears. There *was* something in this lab, something besides the professor and myself, unless it were some ventriloquial trick on Tarbell's part. But I didn't regard the professor capable of such chicanery.

"We've got to find it, Rollo," the professor undertoned. "Much depends upon it. Our reputations — even our lives! Remember, we're believers in this stuff!"

Tarbell was a believer all right, but frankly, I hadn't been until that moment. But I didn't say so to the prof. I just began stalking the lab with him, hunting for the thing that seemed to mock us with its breathing, but could not be seen.

A beaker fell. I thought Tarbell had knocked it over, but he was a dozen feet from the spot when I looked. I pounced in that direction and a Bunsen burner clattered at my feet. Now Tarbell came rushing past the end of the lab bench.

"We've boxed it, Rollo!" the prof exclaimed. "I've already got my hands on it!"

As Tarbell reached, he recoiled, jarred half out of his shoes. Next he was grappling with something and vaguely, the prof's form was blurred from my sight, as through a swirl of water. Then Tarbell shrieked: "Look out!"

He must have known from the way the invisible thing flung him aside that it was coming straight at me. I took the professor at his word and let go with a terrific punch at empty space. I was good at boxing, it was my only sport. I'd had to take it up to hold my own against students who tried forcibly to wean me from my pretended belief in the teachings of Elkswatawa. Now my training held me in good stead.

My fist met something thick and rubbery. Its form bounced back and knocked over a work bench. I could hear the "Oof" it gave and the stifled shriek that followed when the prof pounced upon it and slugged it with a stool that he'd grabbed from beside the work bench. Together, we picked up the invisible monster.

It was squatty, about three feet tall. It seemed dead for we couldn't make it respond. Man, beast or bird, we couldn't guess what it might be. "It came through the Open Door," Professor Tarbell whispered. "It's real, Rollo." All I could do was nod my agreement. Then, suddenly, the prof was dragging me and the creature that we carried between us. We reached the corner of the lab where there were steps of soft cement, leading up to a little balcony. They had been put in that morning and the cement hadn't hardened.

"Put the thing in that!" ordered Tarbell. Then, as we did, he added: "Now press it down — cover it with cement — let the stuff harden!"

We did just that. Tarbell clucked happily as he conducted me to the door.

"I'll see you in the morning, Rollo. I can clean up this mess before I leave, because I know that nothing can happen now!"

I was around the lab quite early in the morning. When the professor didn't appear, I called his home. When I learned he hadn't been there since yesterday, I began to worry. I summoned the janitor and we unlocked the lab.

Everything was strewn about the place in evidence of a ferocious struggle. Apparently, Professor Tarbell had battled a powerful monster. I knew that for a fact, because when I looked at the cement steps, I saw they had been broken open, as a butterfly would burst a cocoon.

We'd only stunned the unseen thing, Professor Tarbell and I, when we'd struggled with it. Reviving, it had broken its solid prison and attacked the professor alone. It must have carried him into the dimension or void from which it had come, for we never saw Professor Regulus Tarbell after that.

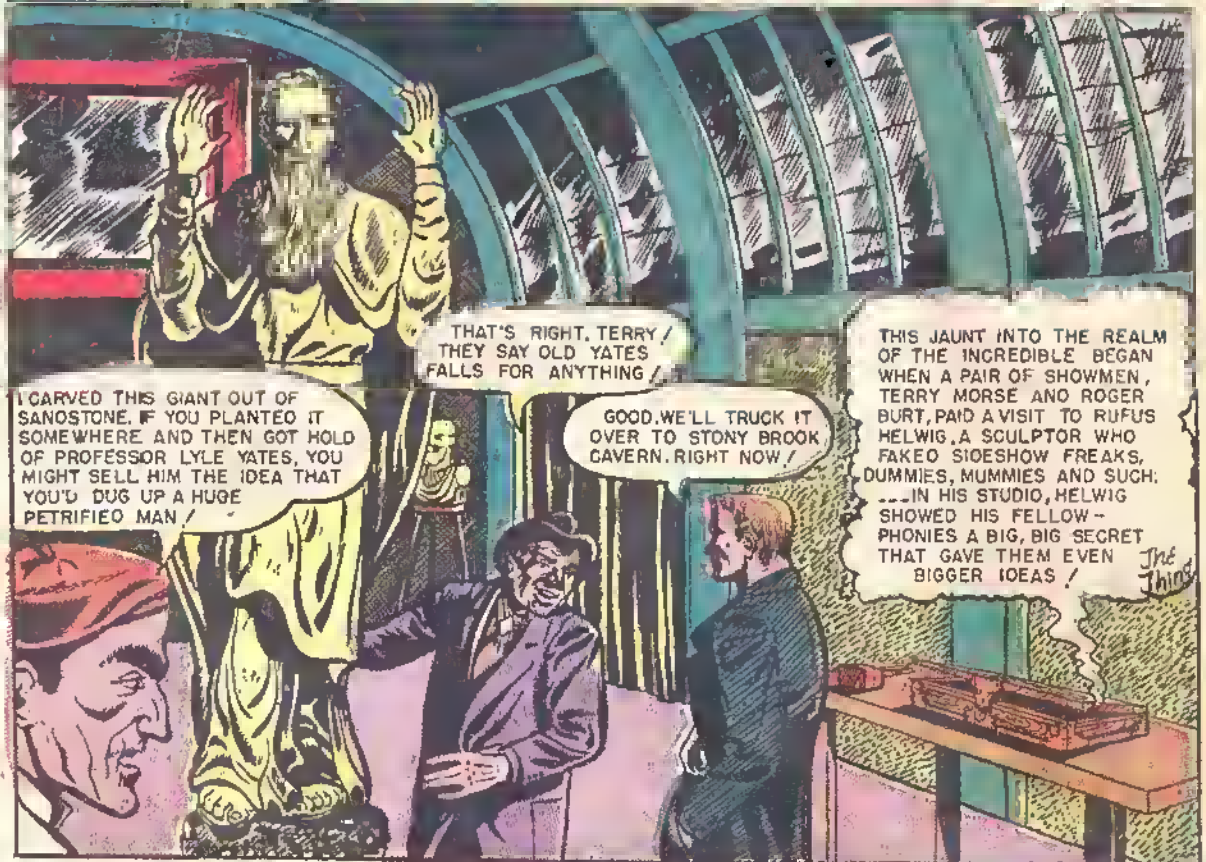
But the creature left its mark. Imprinted in the concrete was the figure of a squatty, flat-faced dwarf with bulging, hideous eyes, more weird than the Prophet could ever have dreamed about, when discoursing from the smoke of a hemp-loaded peace pipe.

I'm in my seventh year, now as a post-grad at U., where I am still studying the teachings of Elkswatawa and trying to spread them among the undergraduates. What's more, I've managed to convince a few.

You see, now I believe the stuff and besides, we have a statue of the Unseen Thing, cast from its cement mold!

THE THING

THE PETRIFIED GHOST



THAT'S RIGHT, TERRY!
THEY SAY OLD YATES
FALLS FOR ANYTHING!

I CARVED THIS GIANT OUT OF
SANDSTONE. IF YOU PLANTEO IT
SOMEWHERE AND THEN GOT HOLD
OF PROFESSOR LYLE YATES, YOU
MIGHT SELL HIM THE IDEA THAT
YOU'D DUG UP A HUGE
PETRIFIED MAN!

GOOD, WE'LL TRUCK IT
OVER TO STONY BROOK
CAVERN, RIGHT NOW!

THIS JAUNT INTO THE REALM
OF THE INCREDIBLE BEGAN
WHEN A PAIR OF SHOWMEN,
TERRY MORSE AND ROGER
BURT, PAID A VISIT TO RUFUS
HELWIG, A SCULPTOR WHO
FAKED SIDESHOW FREAKS,
DUMMIES, MUMMIES AND SUCH.
...IN HIS STUDIO, HELWIG
SHOWED HIS FELLOW-
PHONES A BIG, BIG SECRET
THAT GAVE THEM EVEN
BIGGER IDEAS!

The Thing



WE BOUGHT THIS CAVE TO
ATTRACT TOURIST TRADE!
THE GIANT WILL SURE
PULL THEM IN!

YOU BET, TERRY, AND
WE CAN SAY THE CAVERN
IS HAUNTED BY THE
GIANTS-GHOST!



REMEMBER THE TERMS!
I GET TWO GRAND
TONIGHT AND TEN
PERCENT OF ALL
ADMISSIONS!

WE'LL SET IT OFF BALANCE
AND WHEN I GIVE THE
WORD, LET IT GO!

RIGHT!

THE THING



WE CAN WORK IT RIGHT IN ON THESE ROLLERS THAT WE USED TO BRING OUT ROCK WHEN WE WERE OPENING THE CAVE!



THATS RIGHT NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW / HERE'S YOUR CASH, HELWIG...



THAT'S RIGHT / I WANT ALL THAT'S COMING TO ME / HEH /

...AND YOU'D BETTER COUNT IT, THERE IN THE LIGHT /



THERE HE IS, OLD ROCKY IN PERSON --- AND NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW HOW HE GOT THERE /

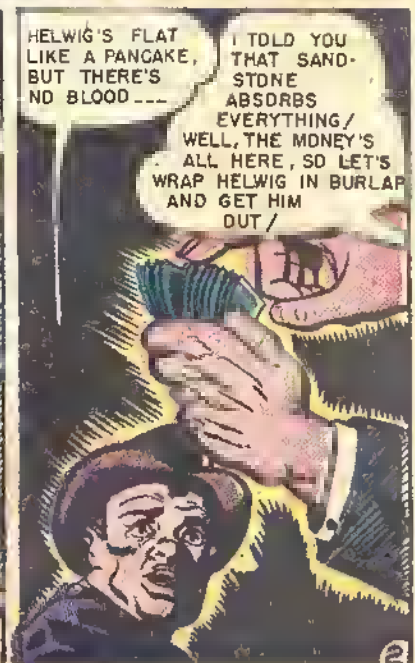


LOOK OUT, HELWIG !!!



EVERYTHING IS DAMP IN THE CAVE, EXCEPT THIS STONE GIANT /

THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S SANDSTONE AND SOPS UP WATER LIKE A SPONGE / COME ON... ROLL HIM OVER /



HELWIG'S FLAT LIKE A PANCAKE, BUT THERE'S NO BLOOD ---

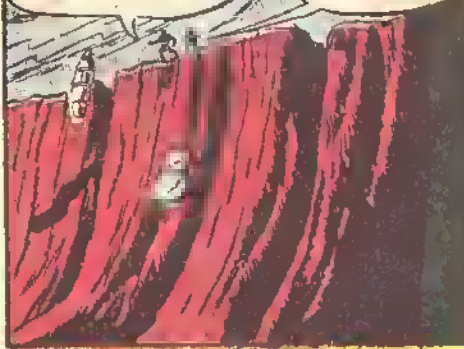
I TOLD YOU THAT SANDSTONE ABSORBS EVERYTHING / WELL, THE MONEY'S ALL HERE, SO LET'S WRAP HELWIG IN BURLAP AND GET HIM OUT /

THE THING

WITH DAWN

THAT'S THE LAST OF HELWIG /
NOW WE'LL DRIVE TO
STATE COLLEGE
AND TALK TO
PROFESSOR YATES /

NO
BLOOD... I
STILL CAN'T
BELIEVE IT /



...AND WE'D JUST BLASTED
OUR WAY INTO A NEW
CORRIDOR WHEN WE
SAW IT LYING
THERE /

I'LL GO WITH
YOU AT ONCE,
GENTLEMEN /

AS BIG AS LIFE ---
NO, FIVE TIMES
BIGGER /



AH / EXAMPLES OF PETRIFIED
LEAVES / DRIPSTONE FORMATIONS
DATING FROM
CENTURIES BACK /

COME ALONG AND
WE'LL REALLY SHOW
YOU SOMETHING /



AN AMAZING EXAMPLE OF
OOLITIC MAN / PRACTICALLY
ENCRUSTED IN A
STALACTITE ENVELOPE /



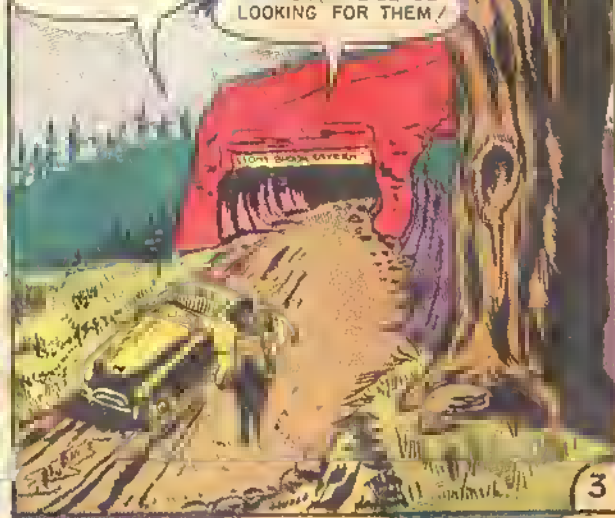
SUCH PRESERVATION MUST BE DUE TO THE
RAPID ACTION OF THE MAGNESIUM
LIMESTONE / SCIENCE OWES YOU
MUCH, GENTLEMEN /

GOOD / JUST LET SCIENCE
SAY SO AND WE'LL COLLECT...
OUR OWN WAY /



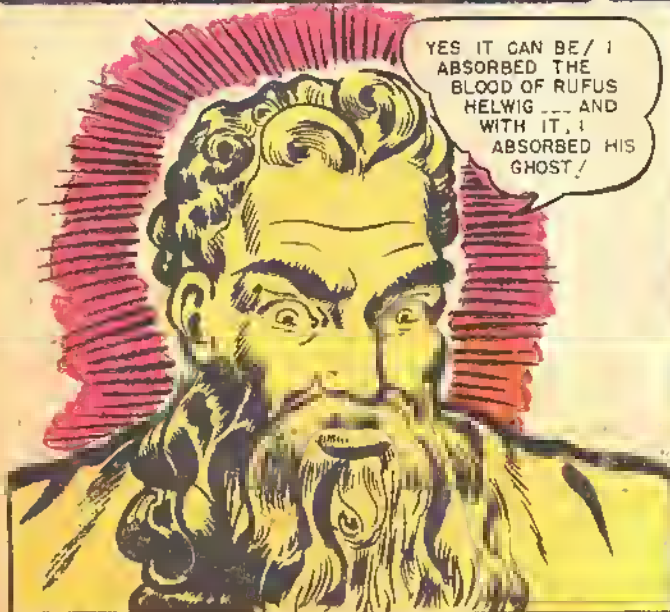
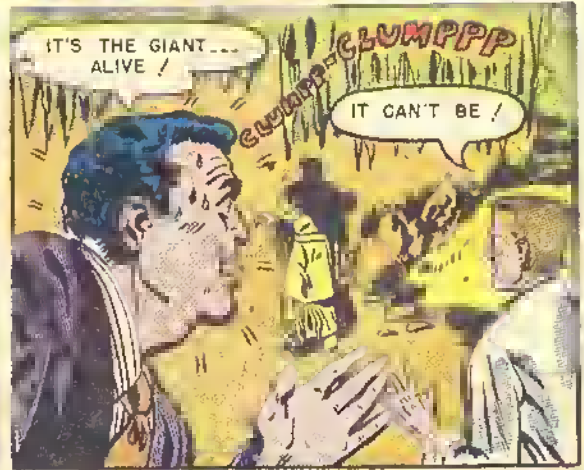
NEXT WEEK, I
SHALL BRING A
COMMITTEE OF
EMINENT
GEOLOGISTS /

GOOD / WE'LL BE
LOOKING FOR THEM /



THE THING

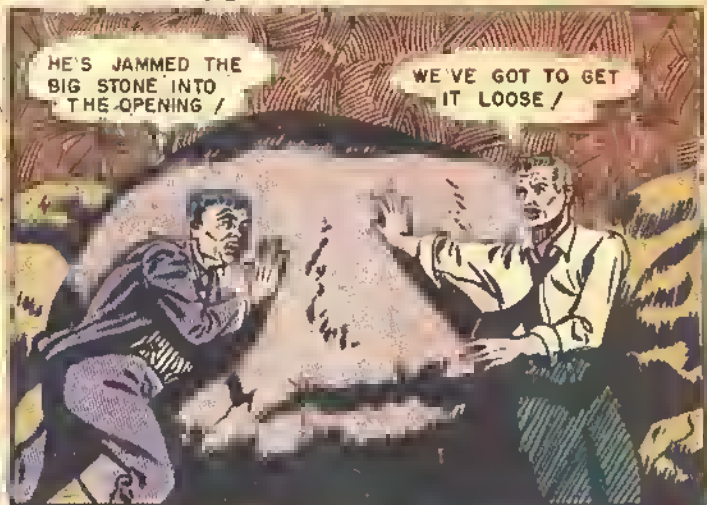
NEXT DAY



THE THING



HEH---HEH !!!



HE'S JAMMED THE
BIG STONE INTO
THE OPENING /

WE'VE GOT TO GET
IT LOOSE /



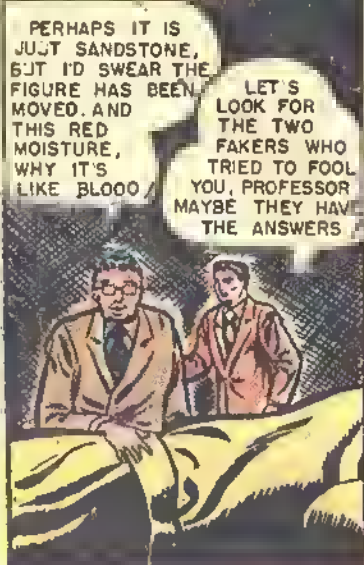
IF WE ONLY HAD THOSE
TOOLS WE THREW
AWAY /

I CAN'T --- BREATHE
THE AIR IS GIVING
OUT-----



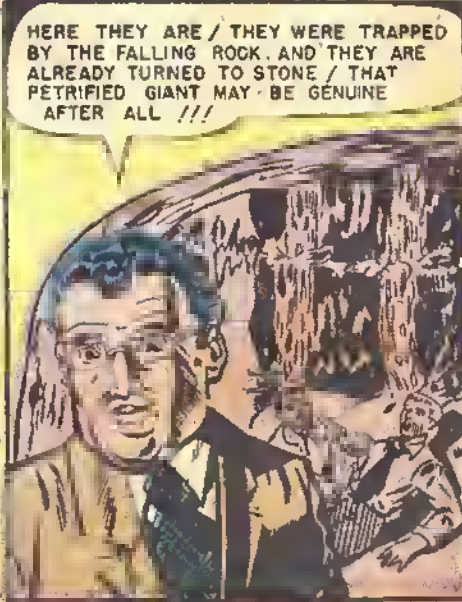
MAYBE --- GASP --- WE
CAN --- GASP --- GET OUT ---
GASP --- THIS WAY ---
GASP --- GASP --- GASPPPPPPP

ONE WEEK LATER

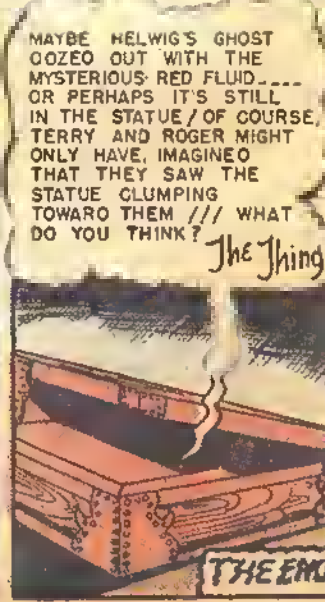


PERHAPS IT IS
JUST SANDSTONE,
BUT I'D SWEAR THE
FIGURE HAS BEEN
MOVED. AND
THIS RED
MOISTURE,
WHY IT'S
LIKE BLOOD /

LET'S
LOOK FOR
THE TWO
FAKERS WHO
TRIED TO FOOL
YOU, PROFESSOR
MAYBE THEY HAVE
THE ANSWERS



HERE THEY ARE / THEY WERE TRAPPED
BY THE FALLING ROCK. AND THEY ARE
ALREADY TURNED TO STONE / THAT
PETRIFIED GIANT MAY BE GENUINE
AFTER ALL !!!



MAYBE HELWIG'S GHOST
GOOZED OUT WITH THE
MYSTERIOUS RED FLUID ---
OR PERHAPS IT'S STILL
IN THE STATUE / OF COURSE,
TERRY AND ROGER MIGHT
ONLY HAVE IMAGINED
THAT THEY SAW THE
STATUE CLUMPING
TOWARD THEM !!! WHAT
DO YOU THINK?

The Thing

THE END

THE THING
PRESENTS:

THE THING

Partners IN DEATH

GATHER
ROUND MY
FINE FRIENDS
AND
FRANTIC
FANATICS!
THIS IS YOUR
OLD BUGBEAR
AND FELLOW
MONSTROSITY,
THE THING,
BRINGING YOU
FANTASTIC
FACTS HOT
FROM THE
FUEL FILE...
ALL ABOUT
THOSE
PARTNERS
IN **DEATH**,
HOWARD
CROFT AND
RAY BRUCE,
AND HOW THEY
HAPPENED
TO GET
THAT-A-WAY...

The Thing

DOCTOR MURDOCK!
YOU'D BETTER GET
OVER HERE **RIGHT**
AWAY! MR. BRUCE
THINKS HE'S SEEING
HIS PARTNER'S
GHOST AGAIN!

HO... **NO!** CROFT!
GO AWAY... DON'T
HAUNT ME!
DON'T!

CROFT
AND
BRUCE

TO BEGIN WITH,
HOWARD CROFT AND
RAY BRUCE WERE
PARTNERS IN **LIFE**,
UNTIL THE DAY WHEN
CROFT, THE SENIOR
MEMBER OF THE
FIRM WENT OVER THE ANNUAL
ACCOUNTS...

TAKE A LOOK,
HOWARD! OUR
GIVE-AWAY
CALENDAR FOR
NEXT YEAR!

LET'S TALK ABOUT
THIS YEAR, RAY,
AND **LAST** YEAR,
AND **BEFORE**.
I'VE BEEN GOING
THROUGH ALL OUR
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS!

IN THE FIVE YEARS WE'VE BEEN
PARTNERS, I FIND
YOU RESPONSIBLE
FOR A SHORTAGE
OF **FIFTEEN**
THOUSAND
DOLLARS!

TAKE IT EASY,
HOWARD!
REMEMBER WHAT
DOC. MURDOCK
SAID ABOUT YOUR
HEART!

JOHN
BELL

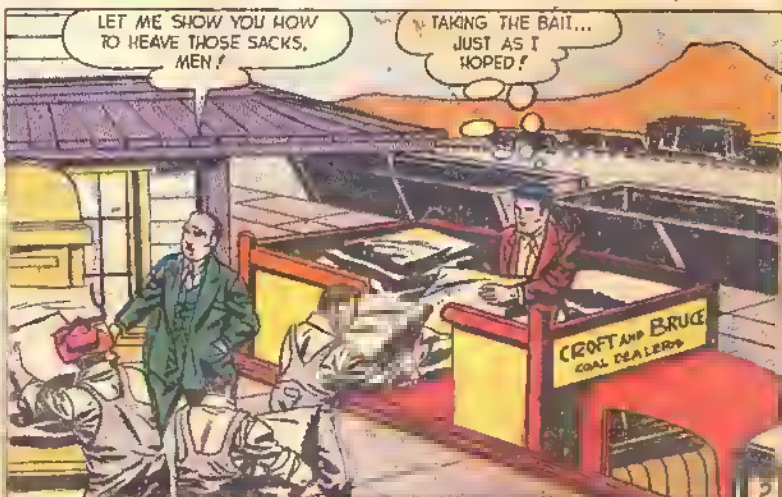
THE THING



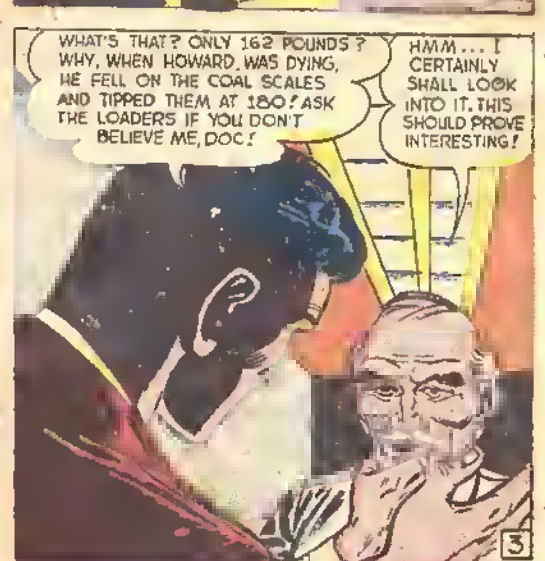
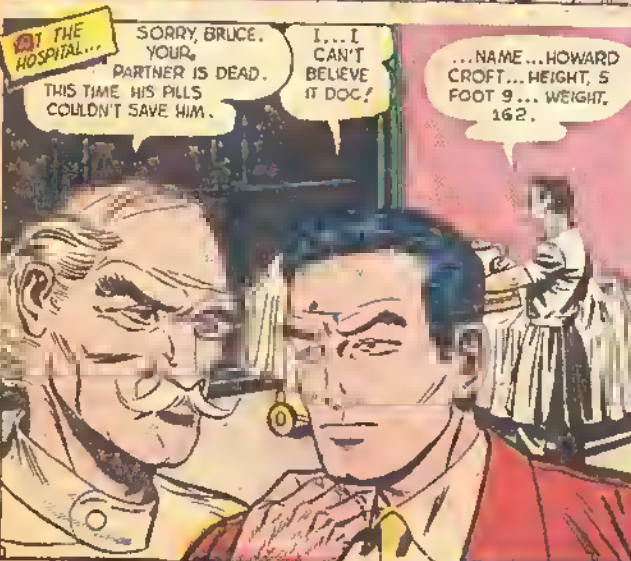
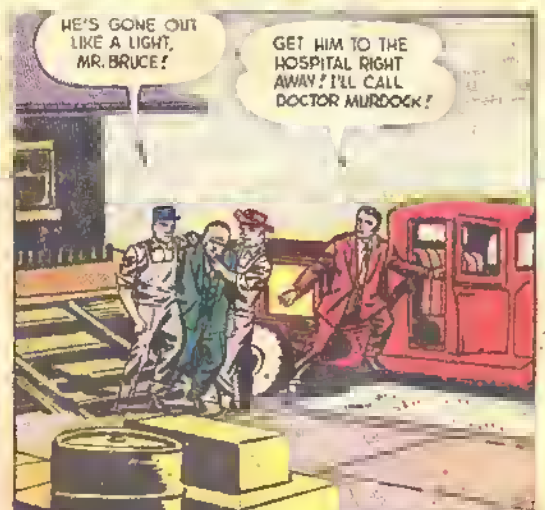
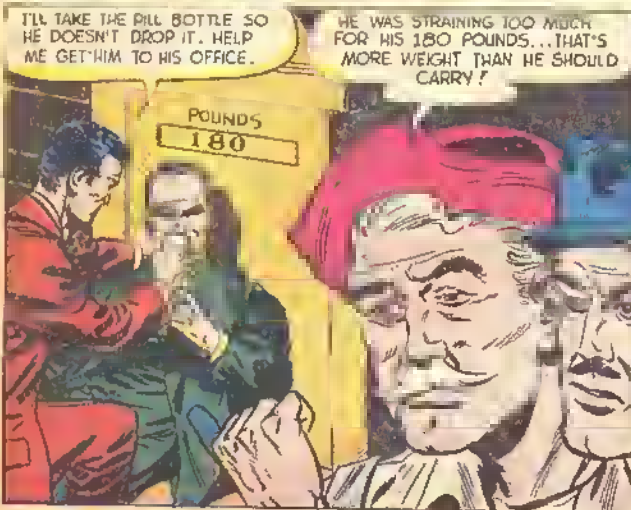
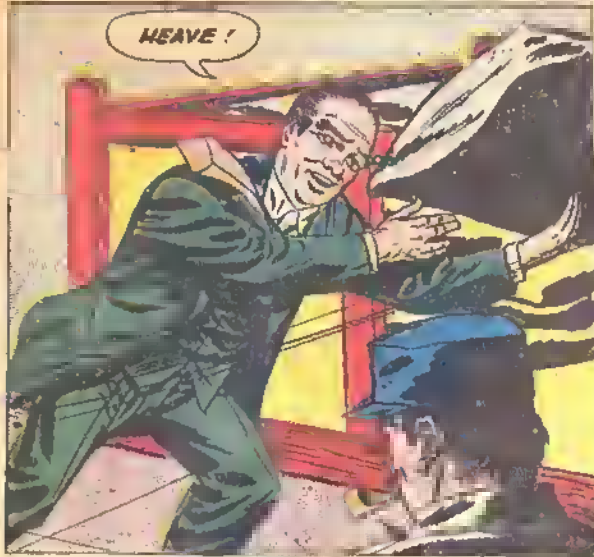
AS THE DAYS PASSED, RAY BRUCE KEPT THINKING OF WAYS TO MAKE UP THE SHORTAGE... BUT ALWAYS HIS MIND CAME BACK TO ONE IDEA...



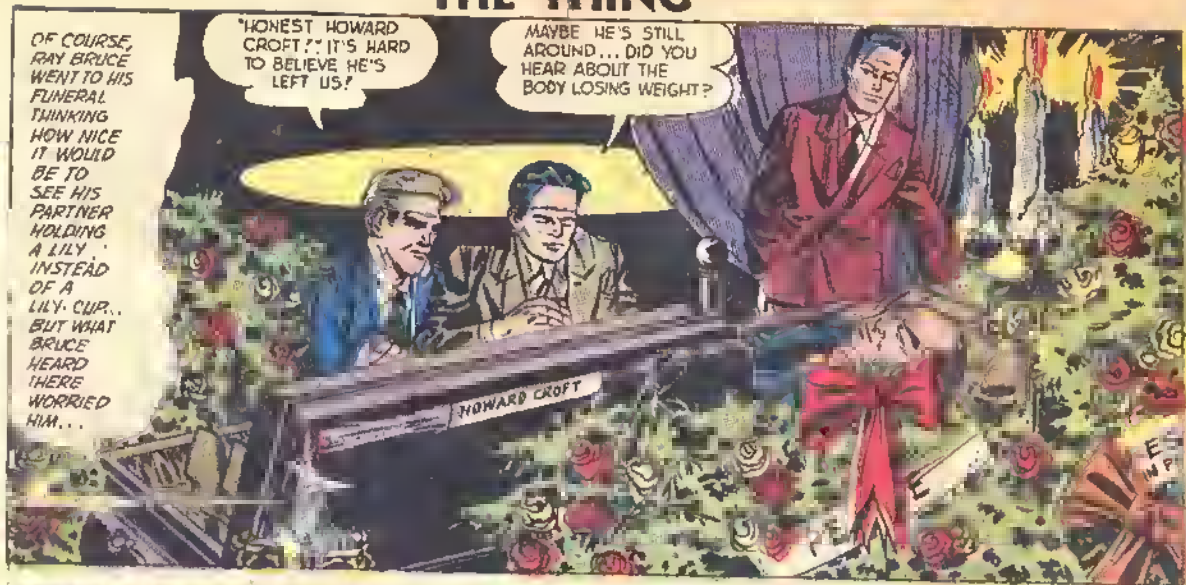
UNTIL THE ANSWER STRUCK HIM... AND IT WAS SO... **SO** SIMPLE! THAT AFTERNOON, AFTER THE SECRETARY HAD LEFT, AND CROFT WAS OUT TALKING TO SOME TRUCKERS...



THE THING



THE THING



OF COURSE, RAY BRUCE WENT TO HIS FUNERAL THINKING HOW NICE IT WOULD BE TO SEE HIS PARTNER HOLDING A LILY INSTEAD OF A LILY CLIP... BUT WHAT BRUCE HEARD THERE WORRIED HIM...

"HONEST HOWARD CROFT?" IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE HE'S LEFT US!

MAYBE HE'S STILL AROUND... DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE BODY LOSING WEIGHT?

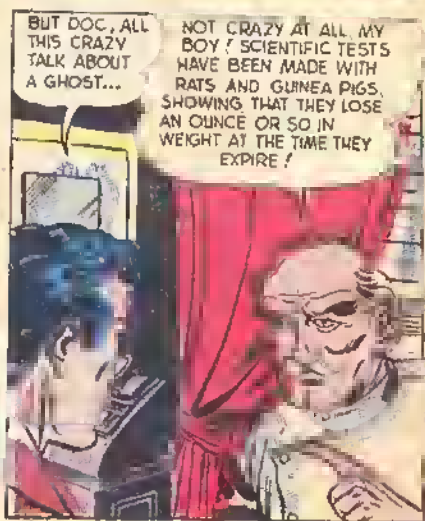


THEY SAY HE LOST NEARLY 20 POUNDS WHILE THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY TO THE HOSPITAL!

YOU MEAN A GHOST WEIGHS THAT MUCH?



A GHOST! WAIT TILL I TALK TO THAT OLD FOOL MURDOCK, SPREADING SUCH SILLY RUMORS...

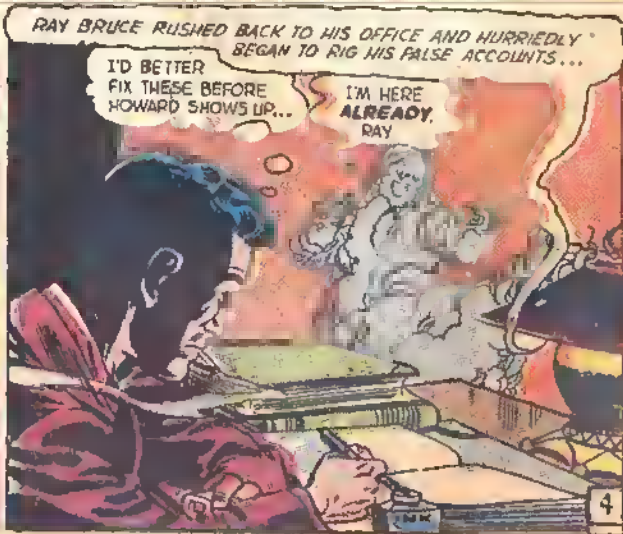


BUT DOC, ALL THIS CRAZY TALK ABOUT A GHOST...

NOT CRAZY AT ALL, MY BOY! SCIENTIFIC TESTS HAVE BEEN MADE WITH RATS AND GUINEA PIGS, SHOWING THAT THEY LOSE AN OUNCE OR SO IN WEIGHT AT THE TIME THEY EXPIRE!



SO A HUMAN'S GHOST WOULD LOGICALLY WEIGH ABOUT 18 POUNDS. YOU SAW THE SCALES YOURSELF, RAY! GO ON BACK TO WORK AND DON'T LET YOUR PARTNER HAUNT YOU...



RAY BRUCE RUSHED BACK TO HIS OFFICE AND HURRIEDLY BEGAN TO RIG HIS FALSE ACCOUNTS...

I'D BETTER FIX THESE BEFORE HOWARD SHOWS UP...

I'M HERE ALREADY, RAY

THE THING

AND THERE'S AN EASIER WAY OF FIXING THOSE BOOKS... **LIKE THIS!** BUT IT WON'T HELP YOU... NOT WHILE I'M AROUND! AND I INTEND TO **STAY!**

NO... **NO...** GO AWAY!

BUT... BUT I HEARD YOU SHOUTING AT SOMEONE, MR. BRUCE. WHO WAS IN HERE?

I... I JUST SAW ~~HOMER~~... I MEAN I SAW HIS GHOST... I MEAN I SPILLED SOME INK ALL OVER THESE RECORDS!

AS MORE DAYS WENT PAST, RAY BRUCE KEPT SEEING HIS PARTNER'S GHOST AGAIN AND AGAIN...

I'VE FINISHED ALL THOSE RECORDS FROM THE DATA YOU GAVE ME MR. BRUCE...

HI, RAY! WITH 20 POUNDS WEIGHT, I CAN DELIVER A STRONG HAND-CLAP AS WELL AS SPILL INK BOTTLES!

AAAGGHHH...

YOU SWITCHED THE PILLS! YOU FAKED THE BOOKS! YOU OWN THE BUSINESS, LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL! BUT YOU DIDN'T COUNT ON A **GHOST** COMING WITH IT!

GO AWAY... GO AWAY!

THERE'S NOBODY THERE, MR BRUCE!

UNTIL ONE DAY...

RAY BRUCE HAS GONE SO BALMY, HIS SECRETARY QUIT HIM... THOUGH HE DOESN'T KNOW IT YET!

HI, MR. BRUCE! HOW'S YOUR FRIEND, THE GHOST?

GOT HIM IN YOUR POCKET?

JANE! GONE! I CAN'T TAKE IT ALONE...

YOU **AREN'T** ALONE, RAY!

Dear Mr. Bruce—
I'm sorry, but I can't stand any longer...
Jane

THE THING



I'M HERE WITH YOU, RAY! DON'T YOU REMEMBER ME... YOUR PARTNER HOWARD CROFT... ALL 20 POUNDS OF GHOST!

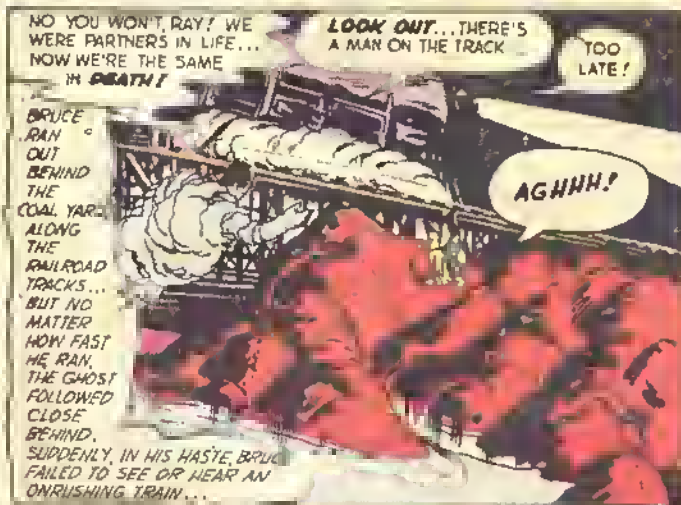
LET ME OUT!



YOU ARE OUT, RAY... AND I'M STILL WITH YOU!

I'LL GET AWAY FROM YOU YET!

SLAM



NO YOU WON'T, RAY! WE WERE PARTNERS IN LIFE... NOW WE'RE THE SAME IN DEATH!

LOOK OUT... THERE'S A MAN ON THE TRACK

TOO LATE!

AGHHH!

BRUCE RAN OUT BEHIND THE COAL YARD ALONG THE RAILROAD TRACKS... BUT NO MATTER HOW FAST HE RAN, THE GHOST FOLLOWED CLOSE BEHIND. SUDDENLY, IN HIS HASTE, BRUCE FAILED TO SEE OR HEAR AN ONRUSHING TRAIN...



THERE'S NOT A MARK ON HIM, DOC! MAYBE HE WAS JUST SCARED TO DEATH!

YOU MAY BE RIGHT AT THAT!



BUT THAT WASN'T QUITE ALL! ONE WEEK LATER WHEN THE AUCTIONEER CAME TO APPRAISE THE COAL YARD...

THEY CALLED THIS FELLOW CROFT, "HONEST HOWARD." WELL TAKE A LOOK AT THE SCALES HE USED TO WEIGH HIS COAL!



WHY THOSE SCALES REGISTER TEN PERCENT OVER WEIGHT!

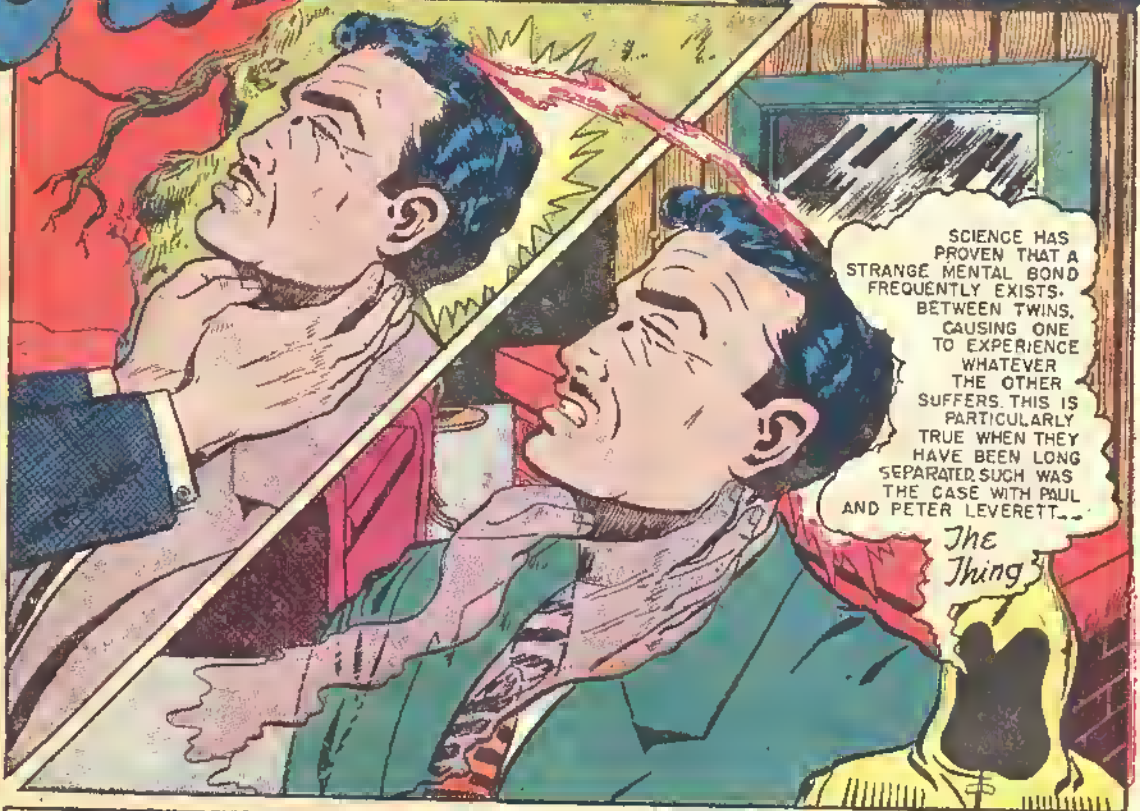
THAT'S RIGHT, BOSS! HONEST HOWARD WAS SELLING SHORT TONS AS LONG ONES.

YES, HOWARD CROFT WAS GYPPIING HIS PARTNER, RAY BRUCE, ALL DURING THE YEARS HE WAS LETTING RAY EMBEZZLE FUNDS! A NICE PAIR OF DOUBLE-CROSSERS! AND CROFT'S GHOST DIDN'T WEIGH 20 POUNDS... IN FACT IT PROBABLY DIDN'T WEIGH ANYTHING. MAYBE THERE WASN'T ANY GHOST, BUT RAY BRUCE HAD BEEN SURE HE SAW ONE JUST THE SAME... THE Thing



THE THING

Twins OF DOOM



SCIENCE HAS PROVEN THAT A STRANGE MENTAL BOND FREQUENTLY EXISTS BETWEEN TWINS, CAUSING ONE TO EXPERIENCE WHATEVER THE OTHER SUFFERS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN LONG SEPARATED. SUCH WAS THE CASE WITH PAUL AND PETER LEVERETT...

The Thing



I'D LIKE YOU TO DRIVE ME TO PAUL LEVERETT'S COTTAGE. I'M HIS TWIN BROTHER, PETER /

GEE WHIZ, MISTER / IF YOU HADN'T TOLD ME, I'D HAVE SWORN YOU WAS PAUL LEVERETT HIMSELF /



HERE'S YOUR BROTHER'S COTTAGE. HE'S PROBABLY UP PAINTING ON THE CLIFF. Y'KNOW, HE NEVER MENTIONED HAVING A TWIN BROTHER /

I'VE BEEN IN AUSTRALIA THE LAST TEN YEARS, SO NO WONDER /

THE THING

MEANWHILE

OH, HELLO TOM / I WAS JUST DOING SOME SKETCHES OF CLIFFS / ANYTHING WRONG ?

YES / PLENTY / IT'S ABOUT HELENE DAWSON /

SHE AND I WERE PALS AND PRACTICALLY ENGAGED BEFORE YOU BARGED INTO THESE PARTS....

SAVE YOUR BREATH, TOM / HELENE AND I ARE GOING TO BE MARRIED AND NOBODY WILL STOP US /

NOBODY. HEY? WELL, THAT MEANS I'M NOBODY!

AS TOM VICTOR CHOKES PAUL LEVERETT, A STRANGE PAROXYSM SEIZES PAUL'S TWIN BROTHER ETC.

A NICE COTTAGE YOUR BROTHER HAS HERE... MR. LEVERETT, WHAT'S THE MATTER?

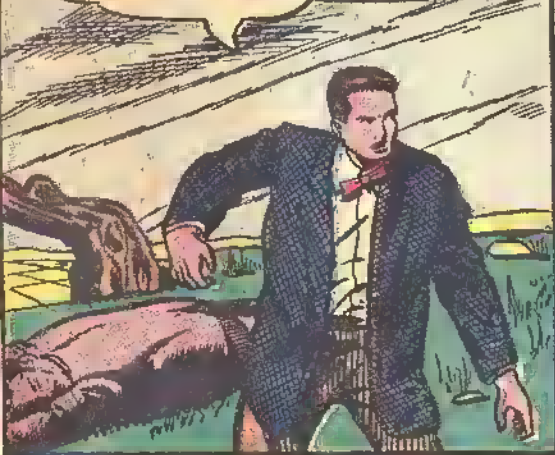
GAAAAAAH... OH!

THOSE TWO CLUTCHES ONE VISIBLE, THE OTHER UNSEEN BOTH BRING THE SAME RESULT...

GAAAAAAH... OH!

THE THING

I'LL GO DOWN TO THE COTTAGE AND WAIT FOR HELENE. I'LL ASK HER IF SHE'S SEEN PAUL, THEY'LL THINK THIS WAS AN ACCIDENT /



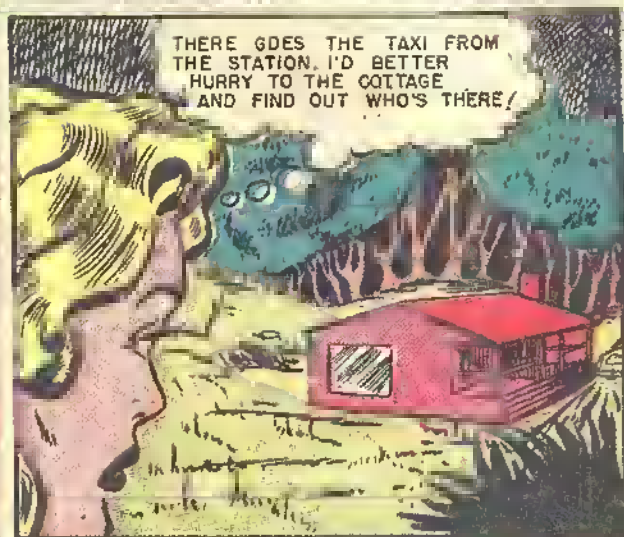
I'D BETTER GET INTO TOWN AND BRING DOG MORGAN BACK HERE /



WHY, THAT MUST BE ONE OF PAUL'S SKETCHES / HE SAID HE'D BE PAINTING ON THE CLIFF /



THERE GOES THE TAXI FROM THE STATION. I'D BETTER HURRY TO THE COTTAGE AND FIND OUT WHO'S THERE /



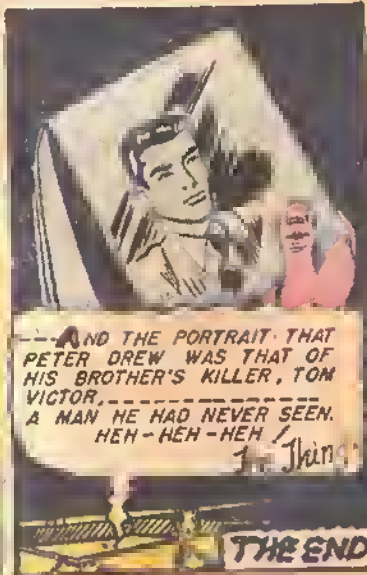
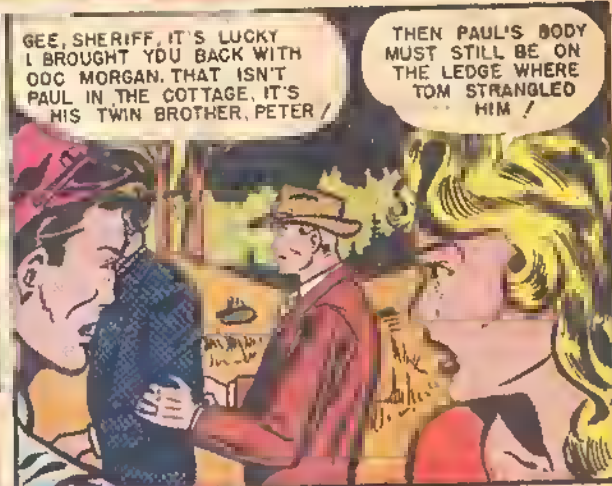
PAUL / PDOR PAUL, SPEAK TO ME / OH, PAUL ----- I'D BETTER HURRY FOR THE DOCTOR ----



THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, HELENE / I DON'T KNOW HOW PAUL GOT DOWN HERE SO FAST --- BUT THIS TIME I'LL MAKE SURE HE'S DEAD /



THE THING



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

WEIRD, FLICKERING LIGHTS CALLED "CORPSE CANDLES" HAVE LONG BEEN REGARDED AS TOKENS OF SOME SUDDEN DEATH...

ALSO TERMED "FETCH LIGHTS" THESE FLAMES FLOAT ABOUT AS THOUGH CARRIED BY GHOSTLY HANDS IN SEARCH OF A VICTIM!



ONCE SUCH LIGHTS WERE SEEN UPON A RIVER BANK, WHICH WAS SEARCHED... BUT NO CLUE WAS FOUND TO THE MYSTERIOUS CANDLES...

A FEW DAYS LATER, A FERRYMAN LOST HIS FOOTING AND WAS SWEEPED TO DOOM BY FLOOD WATERS AT ALMOST THE EXACT SPOT WHERE THE CORPSE LIGHTS HAD APPEARED!



APPEAR SLIMMER INSTANTLY!

With the Amazing
TUMMY FLATTENING COMMANDER

INTERLOCKING HANDS
OF FIRM SUPPORT*

Only \$2.98



Test now how you'll feel! wearing the **COMMANDER** this way: clasp hands across the abdomen as shown and press up and in. Feel good? Protruding stomach held in? That's how you'll look and feel when you put on the **COMMANDER**. No leg bands, buckles, straps or laces. Changeable crotch piece.



WARD GREEN CO., Dept. TR-9

113 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.
Rush **COMMANDER** on approval in Plain Wrapper by Return Mail. I'll pay postman \$2.98 plus postage. If not delighted with immediate results, I may return in 10 days for immediate refund. [Special Large Sizes 48 to 60—\$3.98.]

MY WAIST MEASURE IS.....

Name.....
Address.....
City..... Zone..... State.....
☐ I enclose \$2.98 (or \$3.98 for sizes 48 to 60) Ward Green Co. pays postage. Some refund offer holds.
☐ Also send.....extra crotch pieces. (75¢ each, 3 for \$2.00.)

FREE 10 DAY TRIAL OFFER!

SEND NO MONEY! Convince yourself. See the amazing difference with your own eyes. Try the appearance reducing **COMMANDER** at our expense. If not delighted with the immediate results, return in 10 days for immediate refund. Sent in Plain Wrapper by Return Mail. Don't wait! Act NOW!

*TRADE MARK REG. U. S. PATENT OFFICE

Reducing Specialist Says:
LOSE WEIGHT

Where
It
Shows
Most

REDUCE

MOST ANY
PART OF
THE
BODY WITH

ELECTRIC

Spot Reducer

Relaxing · Soothing
Penetrating Massage

PLUG IN
GRASP
HANDLE
AND
APPLY



UNION WRITERS
LABORATORY
APPROVED



FOR GREATEST BENEFIT IN REDUCING by massage the SPOT REDUCER with or without electricity—Applied as an aid in the relief of pains for which massage is indicated.



TAKE OFF EXCESS WEIGHT!

Don't Stay FAT—You Can LOSE POUNDS and INCHES SAFELY Without Risking HEALTH

LIKE a magic wand, the "Spot Reducer" obeys your every wish. Most any part of your body where it is loose and flabby, wherever you have extra weight and inches, the "Spot Reducer" can aid you in acquiring a youthful, slender and graceful figure. The beauty of this scientifically designed Reducer is that the method is so simple and easy, the results quick, sure and harmless. No exercises or strict diets. No steambaths, drugs or laxatives.

With the SPOT REDUCER you can now enjoy the benefits of RELAXING, SOOTHING massage in the privacy of your own home! Simple to use—just plug in, grasp handle and apply over most any part of the body—wamath, hips, chest, neck, thighs, arms, buttocks, etc. The relaxing, soothing massage breaks down FATY TISSUES, tones the muscles and flesh, and the increased awakened blood circulation carries away waste lot—helps you regain and keep a firm and more GRACEFUL FIGURE!

YOUR OWN PRIVATE MASSEUR AT HOME

When you use the Spot Reducer, it's almost like having your own private masseur at home. It's fun reducing this way! It not only helps you reduce and keep slim—but also aids in the relief of those types of aches and pains—and tired nerves that can be helped by massage! The Spot Reducer is handsomely made of light weight aluminum and rubber and truly a beautiful invention you will be thankful you own. AC 110 volts. Underwriters Laboratory approved.

Take pounds off—keep slim and trim with Spot Reducer! Remarkable new invention which uses one of the most effective reducing methods employed by masseurs and Turkish baths—MASSAGE!

TRY THE SPOT REDUCER 10 DAYS FREE IN YOUR OWN HOME!

Mail this coupon with only \$1 for your Spot Reducer on approval. Pay postman \$8.95 plus delivery—or send \$9.95 (full price) and we ship postage prepaid. Use it for ten days in your own home. Then if not delighted return Spot Reducer for full purchase price refund. Don't delay! You have nothing to lose—except ugly, embarrassing, undesirable pounds of FAT. MAIL COUPON NOW!

SENT ON APPROVAL MAIL COUPON NOW!

ALSO USE IT FOR AGES AND PAINS



CAN'T SLEEP:

Relax with electric Spot Reducer. See how soothing its gentle massage can be. Helps you sleep when massage can be of benefit.



MUSCULAR ACHES:

A handy helper for transient relief of discomfort that can be aided by gentle, relaxing massage.

LOSE WEIGHT OR NO CHARGE

USED BY EXPERTS

Thousands have lost weight this way—in hips, abdomen, legs, arms, neck, buttocks, etc. The same method used by stage, screen and radio personalities and leading reducing salons. The Spot Reducer can be used in your spare time, in the privacy of your own room.

ORDER IT TODAY!

SPOT REDUCER CO., Dept. S-94
318 Market St., Newark, New Jersey

Please send me the Standard Model SPOT REDUCER for 10 days trial period. I enclose \$1.00, upon arrival I will pay postman only \$8.95 plus postage and handling. If not delighted I may return SPOT REDUCER within 10 days for prompt refund of full purchase price.

☐ I enclose \$12.95. Send Deluxe Model, postage pre-paid.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

☐ SAVE POSTAGE—Check here if you enclose \$12.95 for Deluxe Model. We pay all postage and handling charges. Same money back guarantee applies.

☐ I enclose \$9.95. Send Standard Model.

LOSE WEIGHT OR NO CHARGE

MAIL THIS 10 DAY FREE TRIAL COUPON NOW!